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Version: Version of Record

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<http://dx.doi.org/doi:10.21954/ou.ro.0000de4d>

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'THE DEVIL TO PAY' AND ITS INFLUENCE ON  
EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY GERMAN SINGSPIEL

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Submitted for the degree Ph. D.

Faculty of Arts  
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March 1985

Authors Number : HDD 8397  
Date of Submission : March 85  
Date of Award : 22.11.85



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THE DEVIL TO PAY AND ITS INFLUENCE ON

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ABSTRACT

The première of Christian Felix Weisse's Singspiel Der Teufel ist los, oder die verwandelten Weiber was presented at the theatre in Quandts Hof, Leipzig, on the 5th May 1766. There it won immediate success which soon spread throughout the German speaking world. The ensuing craze for similar entertainments played an important part in the development of the genre.

This was not an original piece, however, and its success was dependent upon the skill with which Weisse had contrived to combine two quite different styles. This he achieved by means of Charles Coffey's The Devil to Pay, or the Wives metamorphos'd, an English ballad-opera, and Michel Jean Sedaine's Le diable à quatre, written in the form of a French opéra comique.

The purpose of this study is to examine Coffey's ballad-opera together with those adaptations that enabled Weisse to develop the Singspiel into a form which stood as a model for many years afterwards.

THE DEVIL TO PAY AND ITS INFLUENCE ON  
EIGHTEENTH CENTURY SINGSPIEL

Introduction

During the seventeenth century a form of drama with incidental music attracted a following among the citizens of London. The Fairie Queen (1695), adapted from Shakespeare's Midsummer Night's Dream with music by Purcell, was among the best known of these semi-operas, and it was well received by the largely Protestant community.

Meanwhile the nobility, having witnessed Italian opera at first hand as a result of taking the fashionable grand tour, sought to establish opera seria in London. After several failed attempts, The Royal Academy (1718-1728) was founded to promote Italian opera. Its success was marked early in April 1720 when the venture was moved into the more favourable surroundings of the King's Theatre in the Haymarket. Here audiences were delighted by the brilliance and spectacle of these lavish entertainments.

In these circumstances theatres were hard pressed to stay open until, in 1728, the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields staged John Gay's The Beggar's Opera. Its success marked a change in public taste and before long opera seria, which had been so popular with the nobility, gave way to the attractions of ballad-opera.

This new attraction quickly filled the vacuum left by the commercial failure of the Italian opera. Part of their appeal lay in their novelty, part in their origin, for they drew upon a long tradition of burlesque and farce to be found in English comedy and in the old seventeenth century antimasques. All of these pieces were drawn to depict scenes of common life. Moreover, they were staged with attractive English tunes. This formula won much support and soon found a following abroad, especially in

Paris when, following the pamphlet war, the querelle des bouffons in 1752, tragédie lyrique was discarded in favour of opéras comiques. Some of these were adaptations of English ballad-operas. Meanwhile in North Germany the Singspiel, also inspired by the craze for ballad-opera, had become firmly established in the theatres.

The Beggar's Opera was performed in Paris in 1750 and was adapted for the German stage as Der Strassenräuber, but its interest proved too parochial to repeat the success it had enjoyed in London. In this respect, Charles Coffey's The Devil to Pay turned out to be far more adaptable.

This present study is concerned with one-act versions of the original ballad-opera: Coffey's The Devil to Pay (London, 1731) with music arranged by Seedo; the German translation by Caspar von Borcke, Der Teufel ist los (Berlin, 1743) again with music arranged by Seedo; and the newly revised translation by Weisse, Der Teufel ist los (Leipzig, 1752) with entirely new music by Standfuss. In Paris, Sedaine re-cast Coffey's afterpiece in the form of a full length three-act piece, Le diable à quatre, which received its première in 1756, with music arranged by the composer Philidor, consisting almost wholly of vaudevilles.

The success of this version inspired Weisse to revise his own earlier one-act version of 1752 and expand it into a full-length entertainment. This was again presented under the German title, Der Teufel ist los (1766). This piece retained much of Standfuss's music, but included a number of new songs by Johann Adam Hiller who, in partnership with Weisse, firmly established the form of the Singspiel with a stream of successful pieces presented in Leipzig and Berlin between 1766 and 1773.

Subsequently theatre scholars, seeking to establish the origins of what had by then grown into their national opera, investigated these early Singspiele with great interest. Der Teufel ist los, as the first of these, attracted particular attention. In spite of this high level of

interest, studies of the text by Schletterer (1863) and Minor (1880), and studies of the music by Calmus (1908) and Kawada (1969), did not examine all of these adaptations. The resulting confusion was then further compounded by the existence of two versions of the music. The copy of the theatre manuscript lodged with Herr Küttner, the Hofmeister to the court at Dresden, contains many discrepancies when compared with the keyboard edition given out by Hiller in 1770. Indeed, Calmus appears to have been unaware of the existence of the theatre copy, and discussed Hiller's music entirely from the keyboard edition. In her study of Hiller's Singspiele (1969) Kyoko Kawada deliberately excluded the music to Der Teufel ist los because some of the numbers were clearly by Standfuss while others could be ascribed to either of the two composers.

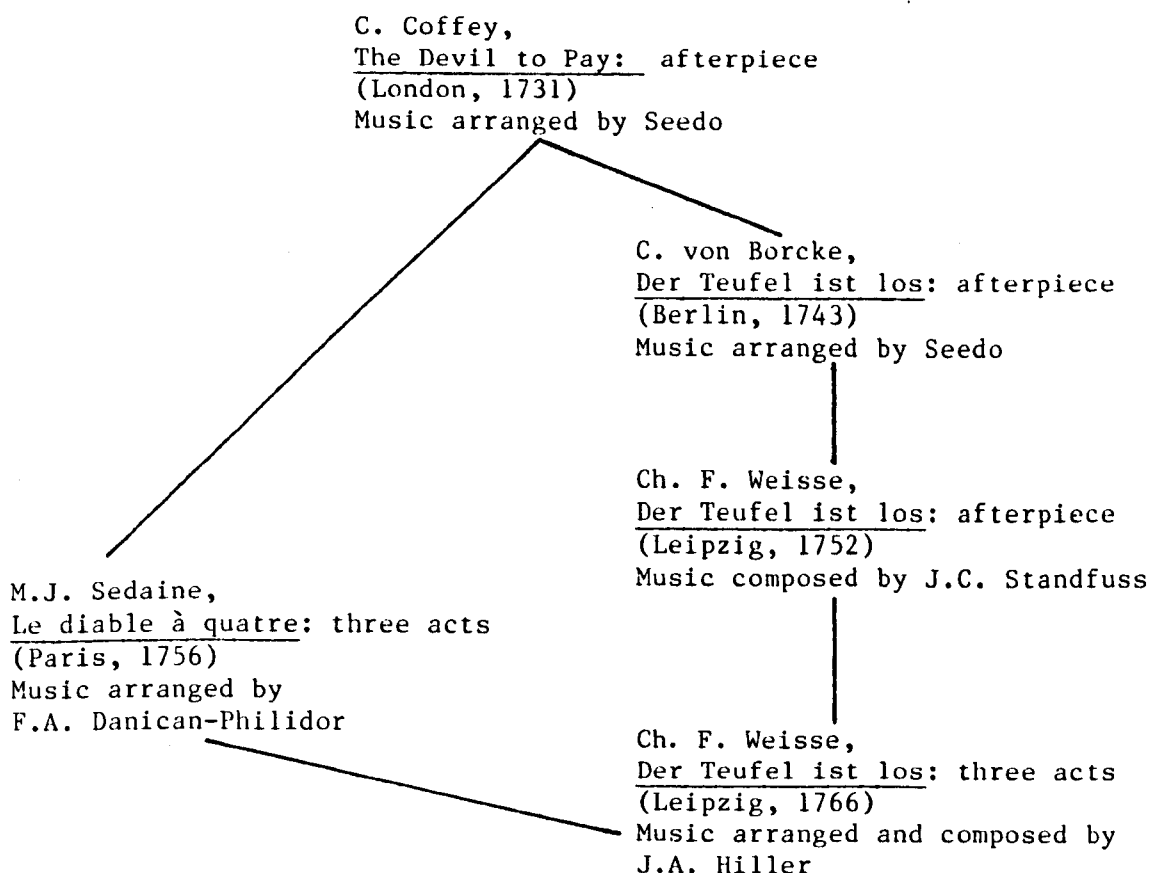
Following the successful adaptation of Coffey's The Devil to Pay, Weisse turned his attention to adapting a number of opéras comiques. Perhaps it was this that gave rise to the widely held assumption that what had begun as an English influence later gave way to a longer lasting French influence. While this is justifiable on the grounds of the sources which Weisse used for his later adaptations, such an assumption fails to take into account both Weisse's long-standing regard for the English theatre tradition and the fact that the Singspiel was merely one part of Weisse's contribution to the German stage.

Taken together, these omissions reveal the need to re-examine the events which led Weisse to expand his earlier one-act version of Der Teufel ist los into the full length version of 1766, and to resolve the confusion arising from the two musical sources. Thus I have re-examined the origins of the text which formed the basis of Coffey's The Devil to Pay and attempted some rudimentary analysis of the main shifts of emphasis between plot and characterisation in the subsequent adaptations of the original English version. This reveals the method by which Weisse took elements from ballad-opera and opéras comiques and imbuing these

with his own style welded them into a new form of musical entertainment which satisfied a particular dramatic requirement within his own final version of this piece. Moreover, comparison with some of his Trauerspiele provides further evidence that Weisse's method was deliberately conceived and applied to subsequent adaptations of French opéras comiques for the German stage.

These literary innovations carried far-reaching consequences for Hiller's music. As a result, my analysis of the two musical sources, the theatre manuscript copy and the published keyboard edition, arises out of the dramatic needs dictated by Weisse's text. The results of this fruitful partnership between Weisse and Hiller established Singspiel as a unique form of musical entertainment and one which inspired succeeding generations of writers and musicians to follow their example.

Stages leading to the foundation of modern Singspiel in the German states



See also Appendix VI.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude for the invaluable and personal assistance I received from libraries during the course of my research in England. The British Library, Cambridge University Library and the Literary & Philosophical Society Library in Newcastle upon Tyne were especially useful to me.

Similarly, I would like to acknowledge the assistance I received from libraries in Germany: the University Library in Hamburg, the Regional Library in Dresden and the State Library of Bavaria in Munich.

I would especially like to thank my tutors Dr J. Buttrey and Dr E. Manning, and my internal supervisor Dr D. Barsham, without whose guidance and support my work would never have been completed.

Lastly, I would like to thank my wife, Margaret, for her unstinting help in reading the French texts which contributed so much to the outcome of the argument.

## CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction	i
Acknowledgements	v

### CHAPTER ONE

#### The Origins of The Devil to Pay: the one-act Ballad Farce

A	The background to the earlier versions	1
B	<u>The Devil of a Wife</u>	2
C	<u>The Devil of a Wife</u> : synopsis	6
D	The development of the corrective-comedy	9
E	The first night and the play's subsequent history	13
F	The object of Jevon's satire	15
G	<u>The Devil of a Wife</u> revived (1729)	18
H	The circumstances in which the play flourished	19
I	The vogue for ballad-opera	23
J	The adaptation of Jevon's farce as a full-length ballad-opera	24
K	Events surrounding the preparation of the afterpiece	28
L	<u>The Devil to Pay, or the Wives metamorphos'd</u> (Afterpiece): the plot after the cutting process	29
M	Problems of authorship	33
N	Immediate and lasting success	36
O	The music	37
P	Coffey's sequel: <u>The merry Cobler</u>	50
Q	Topical elements in the ballad-operas	51

### CHAPTER TWO

#### Contributory Elements in the Early Singspiele

A	The state of German theatre 1743-52	54
B	Christian Felix Weisse: biography	60
C	<u>Der Teufel ist los</u> : Weisse's one-act translation (1752)	68
D	Standfuss's music to <u>Der Teufel</u>	70
E	Some critical objections	75
F	The Seven Years' War and its effects on theatre life	85
G	Weisse's stay in Paris	88
H	Sedaine's version of <u>The Devil to Pay</u>	90
I	<u>Le diable à quatre</u> : synopsis (1756)	93
J	Sedaine's alterations to the English plot	99
K	Koch's commission for a new <u>Singspiel</u>	104
L	<u>Der Teufel ist los</u> , three-act version: synopsis (1766)	112
M	Weisse's handling of the plot	116
N	Sensibility and realism	129
O	The text as a springboard for the music	133



## CHAPTER THREE

The Style and Character of Singspiel as a Musical Form

A	Hiller's life	149
B	Some aspects of Italian style	156
C	Hiller's overture	163
D	Hiller's approach to the songs	170
E	The musical sources for <u>Der Teufel ist los</u>	173
F	Instrumentation	175
G	The strophic songs	178
H	The transformation music	185
I	Songs to accompany action	194
J	Hiller's use of the <u>arietta</u>	197
K	Hiller's use of aria form	203
L	The finale	207
M	The response of the critics	215
N	The keyboard edition of 1770	220

## CHAPTER FOUR

Literary Reform and the Singspiele

A	<u>Der Teufel ist los</u> and Gottsched's waning influence	227
B	The old tragedy	228
C	Lessing's tragedy of common life	232
D	Weisse's contribution to classical tragedy	234
E	Weisse's last <u>Singspiel: Die Jubelhochzeit</u> (1773)	239
F	The <u>Singspiel</u> as a literary form	248

CONCLUSION	253
------------	-----

BIBLIOGRAPHY	260
--------------	-----

APPENDIX I.	<u>The Devil to Pay: Airs and Parodies</u>	266
APPENDIX II.	<u>The Devil to Pay: Airs and Basses</u>	303
APPENDIX III.	Selected numbers from Hiller's keyboard edition together with corresponding numbers from the handwritten theatre copy	326
APPENDIX IV.	Opening Scenes	456
APPENDIX V.	Finales	475
APPENDIX VI.	Synopsis of <u>Der Teufel ist los</u> showing the origins of the added parts to the full-length version of 1766	500

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE ORIGINS OF THE DEVIL TO PAY: THE ONE-ACT BALLAD-FARCE

#### A. The background to the earlier versions

The one-act afterpiece, The Devil to Pay, or the Wives metamorphos'd,<sup>1</sup> was performed for the first time at the theatre in Drury Lane, on the 16th August, 1731.<sup>1</sup> In this form, it went on to become one of the most outstanding box-office attractions of the century; so much so, that now, it completely overshadows the two pieces from which it was derived. These were: the full-length ballad-opera, acted under the same title, from which it had been derived, and the less well-known seventeenth-century farce, from which the ballad opera, in turn, had been adapted: The Devil of a Wife; or A comical Transformation.<sup>2</sup>

In 1686 Thomas Jevon, an actor and dancer with the United Company, turned playwright; his one and only play, The Devil of a Wife, was a remarkable success. Much of its appeal arises from the antics of its two leading comic characters. These were Jobson, the beer-drinking strap-swinging cobbler, and his arch-enemy, the disreputable Non-conformist chaplain Noddy, who has ingratiated himself into the household of Sir Richard Lovemore: a country gentleman of the old school and a devout Anglican. By deliberately bringing these opposing elements under the same roof, Jevon was then able to use the tensions which spring from them to subject evils that once more beset the times to a closer examination.

The Devil of a Wife with its hilarious scenes of farce remained

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1. C. Coffey, The Devil of a Wife, or the Wives metamorphos'd (London, 1731). The once-act afterpiece.

2. T. Jevon, The Devil of a Wife, or A comical Transformation (London, 1686).

a favourite with audiences for a span of forty-five years, when its scenes of music and dancing attracted attention to the possibility of turning Jevon's old farce into a ballad-opera.

#### B. The Devil of a Wife

Jevon set The Devil of a Wife in an English country village. The action takes place during the Christmas holidays of 1685-6, and during the course of the play two centres of interest emerge: the well-ordered and peaceful fireside enjoyed by Jobson, the cobbler, and, in contrast to this, the continual disharmony suffered by the members of Sir Richard Lovemore's household. The reason for this unfortunate state of affairs soon becomes apparent, for it turns out that he has been imprudent enough to have married not only the most defiant and bad-tempered of women, but also one opposed to his Anglican religion. Thus, he is continually subjected to a torrent of abuse from his wife, who is constantly supported by her Nonconformist chaplain, Noddy. Jobson, on the other hand, suffers none of these disadvantages; for by the simple expedient of his strap, he has long since secured his wife's complete obedience. Yet, Jevon's artless portrayal of domestic discord conceals a more serious purpose.

In 1686, religious intolerance had once more grown to the point when it threatened the security of the realm. By means of drawing the characters in his play to be of opposing religious conviction, Jevon held a model of the contemporary world before his audience to remind them of the troubles which many of them had recently experienced. Certainly, the history of the times reveals an atmosphere of foreboding and disquiet.

The Restoration had marked the beginning of a much needed period of calm, during which the bitter divisions of the past were forgotten, and men who had formerly been enemies were gradually reconciled. This period of peace was by no means without moments of disquiet. The designs of

the scurrilous priest, Titus Oates, came to a head in 1678 with the revelation of the Popish Plot.<sup>1</sup> This was followed by the discovery of a republican plot on the king's life, to be attempted near Rye House, in Hertfordshire, during 1683. Then, just when the country seemed to be recovering from these events, Charles was taken ill, and unexpectedly on the 5th of February 1684/5, he died. Thus, amid these portents for further troubles, the succession passed to his brother James, who became the first Catholic monarch since Queen Mary.

In spite of the difficulties facing him, James acted decisively. His Anglican bishops regarded the new reign with the deepest suspicion, but their anxieties were soon dispelled by James' coronation oath, to uphold the established position of the Church of England. With Anglican opposition thus neutralised, James immediately set to work amid great secrecy on improving the position of the Catholics.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the fact that Jevon made one of his characters not merely an Anglican, but specifically a devout Anglican, in these circumstances carries a special significance, for James' next move was to promote the idea of religious toleration. This action amounted to the withdrawal of James' all-important coronation pledge to the Anglican bishops. Moreover, their unease was only reinforced by James public expression of sympathy for the Nonconformists' cause.

The largest sect among the Nonconformists at that time was the Society of Friends, known even then by the tag of Quaker, from the frenzy of shaking which sometimes overtook them in moments of religious zeal. The religious laws of the times, designed to maintain the position of the established church, drove the Quakers to make common cause with the Catholics, and they found a powerful ally in the king. James assisted

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1. M. Ashley, England in the Seventeenth Century 1603-1714 (Harmondsworth, 1960), p. 140 ff.

2. T.B. Macaulay, The History of England from the Accession of James the Second (London, 1915), 6 vols. See ii, pp. 723-7.

them in their campaign against the Test Act and payment of the Church Tithe. The Test Act precluded all those who were not of Anglican persuasion from holding public office, while payment of the tithe meant contributing to financial support of another Christian denomination, a matter of conscience.

The king was sympathetic, but the Quakers' most immediate relief took the form of an amnesty. Under its terms, James agreed to release some fourteen hundred of the Friends imprisoned during Charles' reign, in London, for non-payment of the Church rates - the tithe.<sup>1</sup> But, to the Anglicans, it seemed just one further manifestation of James' determination to overturn the established position of their established Church. This fresh blow (against their finances) threatened at once the maintenance of the church and its clergy, and beyond this the Church's ability to discharge its obligation to the parish poor. Beneath these overt manifestations of James' policy of toleration, however, there lurked a more sinister threat to the country.

In exchange for a subsidy paid by King Louis, King Charles had put his signature to the Treaty of Dover, in the June of 1670.<sup>2</sup> Under its terms Charles had agreed to re-convert the country to the Catholic religion, but it fell to James to put the scheme into operation. Before he could do so, however, the Duke of Monmouth, Charles' illegitimate Protestant son, raised his banner in the West Country. James dealt with the rebellion quickly and decisively.<sup>3</sup> With Monmouth out of the way, he was at last free to reward his Catholic friends for their loyalty. Indeed, before the year was out, he had wrested power from the Anglican House of Commons and ruled, instead, by oligarchy. Formed from his

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1. J. Gough, A History of the People called Quakers (Dublin, 1789-90), 4 vols. See *iii*, p. 168.

2. Ashley, England in the Seventeenth Century 1603-1714 (Harmondsworth, 1959), p. 130.

3. Ibid., p. 167.

chosen circle of friends and advisers, this was the notorious Catholic Cabal.<sup>1</sup> In the light of these circumstances, it was only to be expected that Catholic optimism would be reflected in the celebrations arranged to mark the first anniversary of James' accession in 1686/7.<sup>2</sup>

The centre-piece of this glittering court occasion was an imported entertainment from Paris: Lully's opera, Cadmus et Hermione.<sup>3</sup> Not to be outdone, the English actors, who had already fallen on hard times, prepared a rival celebration-piece of their own. Evidence contained in the prologue indicates that The Devil of a Wife was the play written to counter the attractions of the French opera which was performed at Whitehall on the 11th February, 1685/6. Lully's opera offered the court splendid scenes of classical drama, interspersed with the usual scenes of ballet - a point readily seized upon by Jevon:<sup>4</sup>

... observe you now  
A Cadmeus Pur qua, Mene vou (sings)  
Begar, Monsieur, it be a pretty whine  
Ki la Danse de Meneway, Oh it be very fine (dances).

Unable (and in any case unwilling) to mount an entertainment remotely resembling an opera, the English actors presented an alternative amusement: a moral comedy, which mounted a scathing attack on the follies of wilfulness, pride and vanity. Thus, instead of the classical five-act plot and the superhuman characters of the classical opera, Jevon offered a three-act farce, set in modern times, in their own native country of England. Moreover, the scenes of music and dancing offered by Jevon in his play were already an everyday part of English life:<sup>5</sup>

Dances you have and various here to-night  
But they are English all, all English quite.  
Throughout English songs, Farce English too  
That's French scene  
All nonsense without any more ado.

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1. Ibid., p. 168.

2. Macaulay, History of England (London, 1915).

3. J. Buttrey, The Evolution of English Opera 1656-95 (Cambridge University, 1967), Phil. Diss., 2 parts. See pt 1, pp. 203-5.

4. Jevon, The Devil of a Wife (London, 1686), Prologue.

5. Ibid.

Jevon's farce, written in the style of a corrective comedy, made a sharp and witty riposte to Lully's high-flown scenes of opera, set in classical times. The piece received its première at the theatre in Dorset Gardens, on the 4th March 1685/6.

### C. The Devil of a Wife: synopsis

#### Act One

At the beginning of the play Nell, at home in her cottage, pleads with Jobson not to desert her for the ale-house. At last, in exasperation, he threatens her with his strap (He that has the best Wife). Nell submits before his threat and Jobson leaves, not for the ale-house, but to attend the Christmas party at Sir Richard Lovemore's house.

Meanwhile the servants, in the absence of their mistress who is visiting her relations with Sir Richard, look forward to a rare night of pleasure. As they wait for their guests, they recount some of their recent sufferings at her hands. Even as they talk, however, they are interrupted by her chaplain, Noddy, seeking to stay his pangs of hunger. His outrageous demands for food being met, he leaves them. As he does so, Jobson arrives at the head of a throng of villagers, among whom is a blind fiddler.

The butler bids them all welcome and calls upon Jobson to sing a catch (To Court a damn'd Vintner). The servants then carry a bowl of punch and dishes laden with party fare in a solemn ceremonial procession. The noise brings Noddy running to the scene, but he is forced to retire before their anger. The chaplain thus vanquished, they drink a toast to the king and all his royal family. Then the party begins in earnest.

The scenes of wild jubilation which follow are brought to a sudden stop by the unexpected return of Sir Richard and Lady Lovemore. With a great cry of rage, Lady Lovemore drives the party guests away, boxing the ears of those nearest to her. In the midst of this tumult Noddy emerges, and taking up a vantage-point - just behind his mistress's skirts - shouts his encouragement to her. Jobson, in mid-flight, pauses to

deliver his song once more (He that has the best Wife). Lady Lovemore, coming upon the blind fiddler, breaks his instrument over his head, leaving Sir Richard to compensate the unfortunate man for his loss. As the last of the guests leave, a knock on the outside door announces a passing magician seeking a night's shelter, but Lady Lovemore, still seething with rage and supported by her chaplain, refuses him hospitality. Sir Richard, humiliated at being no longer master in his own house, sadly directs the man to the cobbler's cottage. As the magician leaves, vowing to be avenged on her ladyship and her chaplain, the room empties, except for Noddy, who finishes the left-overs from the party. At last, visibly the worse for drink, the chaplain goes to bed.

The magician, meanwhile, arrives at the cobbler's cottage to find Nell alone. Warming to her simple hospitality, he listens as she daydreams of one day riding in her own carriage. With the germ of an idea already forming in his mind, the magician then tells her fortune, predicting a future of luxury and ease. Jobson's return shatters the atmosphere, for when he finds Nell alone with a stranger, he accuses her of cuckolding him. The outraged magician protests. Anxious to save Nell further abuse he leaves, but not before including the cobbler in his plans for revenge.

Once outside the cobbler's cottage, the magician summons his two assistants from the spirit-world, Abishog and Nadir, and instructs them to terrify the chaplain out of his wits. This task performed, he gives them further instructions to transform Lady Lovemore into the cobbler's wife, and Nell into the lady of the Manor.

## Act Two

The servants, meanwhile, having devised a plan of their own, disguise themselves as evil spirits. Then, creeping into Noddy's bedroom, where they find him still affected by his drinking, they proceed to extort a lengthy 'confession' from him under the pretext of being agents of Satan.



However, at the height of their triumph, the servants are horrified to witness the 'reality' of a genuine spirit, amid a smell of brimstone and sulphur, extort even more damaging admissions from the lips of the scurrilous chaplain. With the first of the magician's tasks now accomplished Nadir, during a violent thunderstorm, proceeds to transform the two women.

Daybreak finds Jobson cheerfully singing as he works at his stall (The Wife of Bath). Behind him, his 'wife' wakes up to the raucous sound of his voice and surveys her unfamiliar, uncomfortable surroundings in the cottage. Convinced that she has been kidnapped, Lady Lovemore threatens Jobson with a whipping, but the threat of the cobbler's strap forces her to take up the burdensome tasks of a cobbler's wife without further complaint.

By contrast, Nell wakes up alone in her boudoir convinced that she is in heaven. When her servants discover the mysterious change that has overtaken their mistress, they are overjoyed to find themselves treated with dignity and compassion. However, Nell is far from confident in her surroundings, but the amusing social gaffes she makes are put down to the general change in her manner, and when Sir Richard return from hunting the servants rush to tell him the good news - that he will find his wife reading from her Common Prayer Book.

### Act Three

Sir Richard soon falls in love with his new 'wife' and marks their happiness by ordering the church-bells to be rung, and three months' open house kept for his tenants (Let the vain Spark). When Noddy arrives on the scene, he discovers that his 'authority' has disappeared with his mistress's adoption of her husband's religion.

Meanwhile, a furious battle of wills has been fought out in the cobbler's cottage. Jobson, hearing news of Sir Richard's invitation, goes off to join in the celebrations. However, Lady Lovemore, determined to escape her kidnapper, follows hard on his heels, hoping to find someone

who can recognise her.

Lady Lovemore goes straight to the manor-house, where she discovers her father, a man faithful to the 'good old cause' (viz. the Presbyterians), taking lunch, but the old man is frightened by her wild pleas, and the magician's spell proves so powerful that neither her husband, father, chaplain nor her servants recognise her. Indeed, amid the ensuing strife her father quits the house in disgust, convinced that he is witnessing some "prophane" Christmas revel. As he goes, Jobson arrives to take his 'sick wife' back to the comfort of her cottage.

At this point the magician, in a fit of remorse, returns and confesses the details of his revenge to Sir Richard, assuring him that his wife is indeed cured of her faults. As the two men leave together, Noddy appears with the butler. Glass in hand, the chaplain drinks the king's health and boasts that he will still retain his comfortable living by adopting his master's religion (A Boat! A Boat! haste to the Ferry). As he sings, Jobson and Lady Lovemore arrive amid the first of the village well-wishers.

With Sir Richard now fully aware of the events of the previous night, the magician's spell is broken; he recognises his wife, and the remarkable change in her. For her part, Lady Lovemore promises henceforth to obey and honour her husband in all things. Nell, now re-united with Jobson, is content to return to her simple cottage life. While the two ladies agree to keep their clothes as reminders of their providential deliverance, Sir Richard, his authority now restored, drives the chaplain from his house. This task accomplished, Sir Richard presents Jobson with £500 for his trouble, and the farce ends with scenes of joy as the tenants celebrate the newly-found happiness of Sir Richard and his wife.

#### D. The development of the corrective-comedy

The Devil of a Wife contains a number of clues indicating Jevon's

high regard for the reformed comedy. This was a purely English style, developed during the early years of the century by Ben Jonson, whose treatment of character was always crucial to the outcome of his plays. Following his example, Jevon's characters also bear a strong resemblance to Jonson's city characters, drawn to evoke images of town life. While, taken at face value, they appear modern in terms of Jevon's play, upon closer examination it can be seen that they personify particular abstract qualities. Because of this, it is possible to see, behind Jevon's farce, a deeper ritual drama contained within the Jonsonian play form upon which Jevon's plot was based, and which belonged to an even older dramatic tradition.

The function of the characters in these comedies survived from the late medieval morality plays, depicting man's fall into sin as a prerequisite for enacting his spiritual struggle to overcome evil.<sup>1</sup> In pursuance of this aim, many of the morality plays were constructed around themes of forgiveness, embodying the seven deadly sins; others pursued the theme of man's estate. In such plays, it was commonplace to find Everyman yield to Temptation, finally to be rescued by Mercy and Virtue. Out of the rough comedy of such scenes there emerged the convention of Virtue and Vice characters, and the notion that the Vice, wherever possible, should fall victim to the Devil.

Jonson made skilful use of these conventions when he reformed this play form, the better to expose the hypocrisy of the rising Jacobean middle classes, and he succeeded in refining the characterisation of the moralities to the point where a single character like Zeal o' the land Busby in Bartholomew Fair could be drawn to represent a particular section of the community that Jonson wished to ridicule. Jevon employed a similar technique and his characters, once stripped of their superficial

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1. R. Potter, The English Morality Play: Origins, History, and Influence of a Dramatic Tradition (London, 1975), pp. 56-7.

modernity, can be seen to share much the same function as the characters of the old moralities. Thus Noddy, Jevon's Vice-character, is drawn to represent the Puritans. Significantly, he is brought to ruin by the magician, the play's Devil-character.<sup>1</sup>

Further evidence of Johnson's influence is to be found in the way that Jevon introduces the episodes of music and dancing into the action: a point of some interest, since his play was intended to counter the attractions of the French opera given at Whitehall on the 11th February.<sup>2</sup>

It is clear from Jevon's prologue that the opera was sung in French. In spite of this it made a great impact on audiences unused to entertainments of this kind being staged in London. Nevertheless, many people would have been unable to follow the action, nor could they have followed the sense of the arias except by means of the general sentiments expressed in the music, although the spectacle of the ballet might have compensated for this disadvantage. Perhaps it was for these reasons that Jevon included music in The Devil of a Wife so as to arise naturally out of the action: a point he seized upon by drawing attention to the unnatural style of singing demanded by Lully's opera:<sup>3</sup>

Begar Monsieur, it be a pretty Whine

...

That's French scene

All nonsense without any more ado.

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1. The thunderstorm, raising the two spirits Abishog and Nadir, their taunting of Noddy, the accompanying smell of sulphur and brimstone - all elements clearly associated with superstitions surrounding the devil.

2. See above, p. 5.

3. Jevon, The Devil of a Wife, Prologue. See also Jonson, quoted in Herford (ed.) Ben Jonson (Oxford, 1937), 11 vols. See v, p. 291:

Poetry, especially in Playes: wherein, now, in Concupiscence of Daunces, and Antickes so raigneth, as to runne away from Nature, and be afraid of her, is the onely point of art that tickles the Spectators. But how out of purpose, and place, doe I name Art? when the Professors are growne so obstinate contemners of it, and presumers on their owne Naturalls, as they are deriders of all diligence ... simple mocking at the termes, when they understand not the things, thinke to get of wittily with their Ignorance. Nay, they are esteem'd the more learned, and sufficient for this, by the Many, through their



# *Ben Jonson*

*from the painting in the National Portrait Gallery*

*by an unknown artist*

B. Jonson (Ed. Herford) Ben Jonson (Oxford, 1937). Frontispiece.

He then draws attention to the English music in The Devil of a Wife.<sup>1</sup>

In keeping with the Jonsonian ideal, Jevon wrote the music into the action of the play so that when the villagers arrive for their party, they bring in their midst the village fiddler and, as a matter of course, the scene gives way to a musical episode. Similarly, when Sir Richard sings his song, Let the vain Spark, he calls in a group of musicians passing by his window; and later, when Noddy sings his catch - A Boat! A Boat! haste to the Ferry, he is drinking, in itself a natural spring-board to song. When the villagers re-assemble at the end of the play, they return with the fiddler to play for the celebration held to mark their landlord's new-found happiness. The only exception to this scheme occurs in the case of Jobson's opening comic song, He that has the best Wife, inserted to assist the actor to establish himself in the role of the cobbler. Thus, Jevon's scheme echoes Jonson's plea that songs should not be inserted into a play merely to satisfy fashion.

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excellent vice of iudgement. For they commend Writers, as they doe Fencers, or Wrastlers; who if they come in robustuously, and put for it with a great deale of violence, are receiu'd for the brauer fellows: when many times their owne rudenesse is the cause of their disgrace, and a little touch of their Aduersary giues all that boisterous force the foyle. I deny not, but that these men, who alwaies seeke to doe more then inough, may some time happen on some thing that is good, and great; but very seldome: And when it comes it doth not recompence the rest of their ill. It sticks out perhaps, and is more eminent, because all is sordide, and vile about it: as lights are more discern'd in a thick darknesse, then a faint shadow. I speake not this, out of a hope to doe good on any man, against his will; for I know, if it were put to the question of theirs, and mine, the worse would finde more suffrages: because the most favour common errors. But I giue thee this warning, that there is a great difference between those, that (to gain the opinion of Copie) vtter all they can, how euer vnfitly; and those that vse election, and a meane. For it is onely the disease of the vnskillfull, to thinke rude things greater then polish'd: or scatter'd more numerous then compos'd.

1. Jevon, The Devil of a Wife (London, 1686), Prologue.

To counter the French scenes of opera, Jevon chose to use an English play form which contains a well-directed moral lesson; in this respect, his characters serve a particular symbolic purpose, possibly well understood at the time, but no longer an everyday part of theatre life. Thus, when Nell gives voice to her hidden desire to ride in her own coach, the audience witnesses Nell fall into temptation to the sins of envy and ambition (to be a fine lady) and see Lady Lovemore depicted as the epitome of pride and wrath, while Noddy, during the course of the first and second acts, progressively reveals first of all sins of gluttony, sloth and avarice and finally his lust.

The bizarre spectacle of Noddy's trial by Abishog and Nadir now makes dramatic sense. The disreputable chaplain, seen at last in his true colours, is exposed as the villain. In turn, this reveals Jevon's purpose in drawing the chaplain to represent the Nonconformists and Sir Richard Lovemore to represent the Anglicans. With Noddy, drawn to represent the enemies of both Sir Richard and the Anglican cause, finally vanquished, peace and harmony are restored to the house. Thus, the moral lesson in the play is made clear. A social evil is identified, and its cure made explicit in Jevon's scenes of comedy.

#### E. The first night and the play's subsequent history

When the play received its première on the 4th March 1685/6, Peregrine Bertie wrote to the Duchess of Rutland describing The Devil of a Wife as "the strangest thing I ever saw," and drawing attention to the size of the audience, "'twas mighty full the last time and today there was no getting in."<sup>1</sup> This first indication of the play's success was fully borne out by the Newdigate Letter which also appeared on the 4th

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1. Scouten, The London Stage 1600-1800 a Calender of Plays, Entertainments and Afterpieces together with Casts, Box-receipts and Contemporary Comment (Carbondale, Illinois, 1961), 4 parts. See pt i, p. 347.

March: "this day a new play call'd The Devil of a Wife was acted with great applause at that formerly called the D[uke's] Playhouse."<sup>1</sup>

In spite of this success there is no further record of the play being performed again in the theatre until it was revived in 1704.<sup>2</sup>

It may well be that objections were raised on the moral grounds of women being seen en déshabillé and the implications of their exchanging marriage beds. The citizens of London were already seeking to impose moral discipline on the Stage, and a piece like The Devil of a Wife contravened the piety clause in the theatre-patent. Also, the authorities may have raised objections of their own, especially when the plight of Sir Richard bore more than a passing resemblance to that of King James himself, for James' wife, Mary of Modena, was not only a celebrated termagent, but also well known for her religious devotion. Added to this, the Queen employed several Jesuit priests in her household.<sup>3</sup>

Thomas Shadwell, reputed to have been Jevon's brother-in-law, had already employed a similar situation in his play The Lancashire Witches in 1684, the year before Jevon's play was written. As a result, Shadwell was placed under an eight-year ban from writing plays. However, Jevon went even further, for during the course of the play Sir Richard is depicted as a man devoted to the sport of riding to hounds - a method of fox-hunting recently popularised by James.<sup>4</sup> In the absence of more concrete evidence, it would seem reasonable to conclude that such a controversial play was placed under a ban.

In the light of these circumstances, it remains a curious fact that just at a time when the play had been taken out of the repertoire, it achieved success in a curious way, for in 1693 The Devil of a Wife was reprinted and two further editions appeared in 1695. In the year 1715 it had already appeared in six editions, and ran to as many as eight

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1. Ibid., pt i, p. 347.

2. Ibid., pt ii, p. 73.

3. F.C. Turner, James II (London, 1948), pp. 301-2.

4. Ibid., pp. 62-3.



editions when it was reprinted in 1735.<sup>1</sup> Paradoxically, just when the play seems to have been at the very height of its success, it was apparently not being staged. Yet, at the same time, it was apparent that the play was reaching a bigger audience. One possible solution is that the play was acted in the booths which sprang up at fair-times. Certainly, a single playbill survives, publicising such a performance which points towards this having been the chief reason for its success, for a performance of Jevon's play The Devil of a Wife was advertised at Dogget's Booth during August of 1699.<sup>2</sup> Thus, whether or not the play had been forbidden in the theatres, it appears to have survived as a street play; moreover, a street play with sufficient appeal to merit re-issuing the text, but how could such a play not only survive, but survive with its reputation enhanced? The most feasible explanation must lie with its subject ; for if the play was forbidden because of its subject - religion - then it would appear that it also survived because of its usefulness as a weapon that the church could use against the one group of people who continually campaigned against it - the Quakers.

#### F. The object of Jevon's satire

The Quakers' chief grievance was payment of the tithe: the church-rate was imposed on all householders and provided funds for the livings of the clergy and for the relief of the parish poor. The Quakers sought the freedom to cater for their own poor, and failed to see why they were compelled to contribute to the livings of Anglican clergy. Thus, they continually refused to pay the tithe and, as a consequence, many were taken to court by the church bailiffs, and were imprisoned. To make matters worse, once in court they frequently refused to take the existing

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1. Editions appeared in 1686 and 1693: two further editions in 1695: the 6th edition appeared in 1715: the 7th edition in 1724: and the 8th edition in 1735. This takes no account of foreign editions of the play - or those editions printed in Wales, Ireland or Scotland.

2. Scouten, The London Stage (Carbondale, Ill., 1961), pt i, p. 572.

oath, claiming instead a form of words which did not bring the Bible into disrepute, but which was then illegal; thus, the Quakers also campaigned for 'affirmation', a form of words in which the plaintiff's solemn word was allowed in place of the customary oath.

The refusal of the Quakers to take oaths could cause real hardship, holding up bankruptcy proceedings and denying creditors access to the debts owing to them. Meanwhile, under the terms of the Test Act, Quakers were denied the right to hold public office. This meant, among other things, that for their rights to be campaigned in Parliament, they were forced to resort to extreme measures, even though this did not guarantee success.

Following the accession of William and Mary in 1688, the Quakers found themselves better placed to petition Parliament over their grievances.<sup>1</sup> They had proved their loyalty to the Revolution overwhelmingly, and now in 1693 they began to campaign once more for relief from paying church tithes and for affirmation to replace the oath in legal proceedings. Despite high hopes, they failed to win enough support, but they were sufficiently encouraged to continue their campaign.

In 1695, after a long and often bitter struggle, they won a partial acceptance of their petition in the Affirmation Act. Under the terms of the Act, affirmation was accepted in place of the oath in a court of law, but liability for payment of the tithe continued and, in any case, the Act of Affirmation was only to operate for an initial period of seven years.

Intriguingly, these were just the years when Jevon's play was re-printed: once in 1693 and twice more in 1695, the very year in which the Quakers had achieved success. By now, Quaker businessmen were becoming wealthy enough to organise their campaign within Parliament; to this end they constantly monitored Parliamentary business, petitioning for hearings

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1. Gough, A History of the Quakers (Dublin, 1789-90), iii, p. 268.

against their grievances, accepting their reverses as philosophically as they could.<sup>1</sup>

Then in 1715, following the Hanoverian succession, they found that events favoured their cause once more and, having supported the Hanoverians and the Whigs, they once again expected some reward for their loyalty but Arthur Gough, an eighteenth-century Quaker historian, reports only their disappointment, for the Jacobites ensured that "...Jealousies were excited, seditious libels dispensed and the populace stimulated to riot and hatred of the Dissenters."<sup>2</sup> In these circumstances, The Devil of a Wife took on a new and official lease of life, for by 1704 it had been revived in the theatre once more.<sup>3</sup>

By this time there were two companies of actors performing plays under the protection of licences: Drury Lane and Lincoln's Inn Fields. The partisanship of the times, however, was reflected in such a way that plays favouring the Whig cause were staged in the theatre in Drury Lane, while Opposition plays were acted at Lincoln's Inn Fields. Significantly, it was at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields that The Devil of a Wife was revived. During the period from 1715-1720, twenty-three performances were given in this theatre, out of the total of thirty-eight recorded performances. This successful run ended shortly after the scandalous events surrounding the South Sea Bubble, which also coincided with the Quakers winning a second small victory. The Act of Affirmation was made perpetual. This left them paying the tithe as before and still subject to the same restraints as the Catholics.

The Whigs now saw a chance to take their revenge on their opponents. Colley Cibber, a rising actor and playwright, joined the company at Drury Lane, winning instant approval from the Whigs for his adaptation of

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1. Gough, A History of the Quakers (Dublin, 1789-90), iii, pp. 395-408.

2. Ibid., iv, p. 163.

3. Scouten, The London Stage (Carbondale, Illinois, 1961), pt ii, p. 73.

Molière's satire Tartuffe. This piece, performed in 1717, must have been written to counter the success of Jevon's old farce, The Devil of a Wife, for Cibber reports that he made the central character - again a scurrilous private chaplain but in this case he was not a Nonconformist. Instead, Cibber turned him into a non-Juror, who converts his master to the treasonable cause of the Jacobites (Catholicism). At a time when Jacobite invasion scares were an almost daily occurrence, such a play served not only the most sectarian interest, but also underlined the partisan support that continued to sustain Jevon's old farce.

#### G. The Devil of a Wife revived (1729)

When The Devil of a Wife was revived again in 1729, the Tories were largely reconciled to the Hanoverian succession, even though some Jacobites still survived in Parliament. In the City, the number of theatres had expanded to five. Besides the King's Theatre, which presented Italian operas in the Haymarket, there was, immediately opposite, the Little Theatre which offered a variety of entertainments (among them many of the more satirical pieces) but the newest of the theatres was to be found in Goodman's Fields just to the east of the City.<sup>1</sup> Here, when Thomas Odell opened his theatre, one of the first productions to be mounted was Jevon's old comedy and, indeed, it received a surprising number of performances during that season and the one that followed in 1730-31.<sup>2</sup>

Given the religious subject of Jevon's comedy, the close correspondence between the dates of recorded performances and the years when the Quakers were actively campaigning against the tithe, it can be demonstrated that Jevon's farce was revived just at those times when the church party most needed to obstruct the Quaker campaign. In this respect, the performances in the 'Opposition' theatre (viz. in Lincoln's Inn Fields)

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1. This was in addition to Lincoln's Inn Fields, Drury Lane and the Little Theatre, while the King's Theatre, in the Haymarket, was licensed only to stage operas.

2. Scouten, The London Stage (Carbondale, Ill., 1961), iii, pp. 70, 73.

during 1729 are of especial interest, for in 1729, after a period of acquiescence, the Quakers once more formed a committee to re-open their campaign and authorised the re-issue of Pearson's treatise against paying the tithe.<sup>1</sup> The following year they met with Walpole who proved sympathetic to their cause. This was the moment when The Devil of a Wife was revived and acted in Odell's new theatre, on the 5th October 1730. The new Quaker campaign proved inopportune and they were once more disappointed, not least by the acrimony which erupted from the news of a scandal which had broken during 1729.

When the Quakers of Grace-church Street excluded William Gibson, one of their Ministers, from the Meeting House, he was arrested and brought to trial. Among those who testified against him were three women, who swore that he had harboured evil designs upon them. Worse followed, his fellow Quakers boycotted his business until in spite of all his protestations of innocence he went out of business.

In these circumstances, it can be seen that many factors present when Jevon's farce had previously flourished prevailed once again; added to which the play was revived again at Odell's theatre during the season of 1730-31. Then, it was acted on the 27th October, 1730, the 6th January, 1731, and repeated on the 12th and 31st May.<sup>2</sup> This must have been the time when Charles Coffey and John Mottley, the ballad-opera writers, saw the piece, and sensing a golden opportunity decided to adapt it as a ballad-farce.

#### H. The circumstances in which the play flourished

John Mottley was descended from a well connected family, but he had the misfortune to have a father who had died in the service of King

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1. Minutes of the Meetings for Sufferers, MMS XXIV 5/12/29: 12/12/29: 19/12/30: 5/1/30/31, report their contact with Walpole. MMS XXIV 30/11/29 records their authorisation for the reprinting of A. Pearson's Great case against the Tythe Truly Stated, Clearly Open'd and fully Resolv'd (London, 1730).

2. Scouten, The London Stage (Carbondale, Illinois, 1961), pt iii, pp. 105, 106, 112 and 139.

James II. Although Lord Howe, a relative, obtained preferment for him, this was prior to the rise of the Whigs. Soon after the death of Queen Anne, Walpole, then a politician of promise, offered the young man a better place. Mottley resigned his post forthwith - only to find that Walpole had already disposed of the promised place to someone else. Thus, John Mottley's experience of preferment at the hands of Walpole was much the same as that experienced by John Gay and, like Gay, John Mottley resolved to earn his living by writing.<sup>1</sup>

His first offerings were attempts at tragedy, but The Imperial Captives (1720) and Antiochus (1721) were both unsuccessful. Some years later, Mottley turned his attention to burlesque, then at the height of its popularity. No doubt it was his success with pieces like Penelope, a burlesque based on Pope's Ulysses, written in the form of a ballad-opera, that encouraged him to seek out other suitable subjects for adaptation.

Charles Coffey, on the other hand, was an Irishman, born into more modest circumstances. He first came to notice in Dublin, where he made the most of his deformities in playing the part of Aesop.<sup>2</sup> As to his age, almost nothing is known.

His next venture for the theatre was an original piece, a ballad-opera written in imitation of The Beggar's Opera. This was acted under the title of The Beggar's Wedding in Dublin, where it failed. Nothing daunted, Coffey sought his fortune on the London stage. Here his luck changed, and The Beggar's Wedding ran for thirty nights in the Little Theatre in the Haymarket. By coincidence, this was the same theatre which had staged John Mottley's pieces, and it is highly probable that

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1. See the article in the National Dictionary of Biography, "Gay, John". Gay long held expectations of preferment at court. In 1722 he was made Commissioner of Lotteries at £150 per annum. When he was offered the post of Gentleman Usher at a mere £200, he was so incensed that he declined the post on account of his age.

2. See the article in the National Dictionary of Biography under "Coffey, Charles". See also Sir John Vanbrugh, Aesop (London, 1697).

their mutual connection with this theatre was the means of their first meeting.

Meanwhile, the political climate of 1730 had been transformed. After fifteen years of Whig ministries it looked as though Walpole would lose control of his majority in the House of Commons, and with it the premiership. In these circumstances, Lord Townshend, Walpole's partner, made a bid for the leadership, and it was not long before the two men who between them had sustained Whig fortunes for so long openly quarrelled.

The growing disaffection between the two men must have been apparent for some time, and their supposed quarrel supplies one subject of satire in The Beggar's Opera, when Peachum and Lockitt lay hands on one another.<sup>1</sup> The scene in question, however, may actually pre-date the brawl which certainly occurred between Walpole and Townshend, reported by Coxe in his Memoirs and which he claims took place in 1729, nearly a year after The Beggar's Opera had received its première.<sup>2</sup>

Happily for the Opposition press, a similar dispute had come to the attention of the musical world. Handel, seeking to secure the fortunes of the Academy of Music for another season, in 1726 secured the services of a second soprano Faustina Bordoni. Faustina made her début that same year, appearing with Cuzzoni, her fellow soprano singer, who had already secured a place in the affections of her audiences. Unfortunately, the two singers became rivals and, encouraged by their followers, eventually settled their differences on the stage of the King's Theatre in the Haymarket on the 6th of June 1727. The spectacle of the two women fighting provoked a riot and in the ensuing mêlée the theatre was wrecked.<sup>3</sup>

In the light of succeeding events, this scandal provided the press with much ammunition. For when news arrived in England that King

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1. J. Gay, The Beggar's Opera (London, 1729), Act ii, Scene x.

2. W. Coxe, Memoirs of the Life and Administration of Sir Robert Walpole (London, 1798) 3 vols. See i, pp. 335-6.

3. P. Young, Handel (London, 1947), p. 43.

George I had died suddenly on the 14th June in Hanover, Walpole was obliged to announce a general election. Before long, the public disagreement between the two singers was drawn to represent the factions of the day, and the dispute in the Haymarket was made the subject of a mocking article which appeared in the political journal The Craftsman on the 15th July as part of the campaign. The commentary is skilfully managed so as to lampoon both the contest shortly to be decided in the polling booths and the struggle for the leadership. Thus:<sup>1</sup>

The right of Possession is certainly in Cuzzoni which hath enjoyed, without Molestation, for some Years ... Faustina, on the other Hand, insists that Cuzzoni hath consented and promised to yield up that right, and by a secret Stipulation, under her own Hand, which she is ready to produce. Cuzzoni seems to prevaricate a little on this Affair; for as she cannot well deny her own Hand-writing, she would persuade the World it is only a sort of Promise ... to make Faustina easy for the present.

Reporting an event in this way presented a knowledgeable public with an entertaining commentary and without the least risk of a libel prosecution at election time; while, at the same time, the Quakers abandoned their recently opened campaign amid the débâcle of the William Gibson scandal. When the minister was found guilty of the charges brought against him by the female members of his congregation, the Quakers boycotted his shop, forcing him out of business. In this way the effects of the scandal lasted from 1728 until the summer of 1730, when he opened a coffee-house in Burchin Lane.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, with little or no alteration, the original satire contained in Jevon's old farce once again mirrored the life of the times.<sup>3</sup> As a result,

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1. Phil Harmonicus, "Concordia Discors". The Hay-market, July the 11th, 1727", The Craftsman, LIV, 15th July 1727.

2. See the tract Saul's Errand to Damascus: or the Quakers turn'd Persecutors in the case of Mr William Gibson, Mercer, at the Harrow in Grace-Church Street, Proving the Quakers to be the Rioters and Disturbers of their own Meetings obnoxious to the Toleration and Conventicle Acts (London, 1728).

3. See above, p. 19.



in addition to being revived in Odell's theatre in Goodman's Fields, it was adapted as a ballad-opera by Coffey and Mottley.

# I. The vogue for ballad-opera

This new style of entertainment had captured public imagination, and restored the theatres to profitability after years of decline due to the success of Italian opera. The degree of hardship faced by theatre managers during these times can be estimated from Colley Cibber's letter to Sir Richard Steele, dated 12th December 1724:<sup>1</sup>

There are three play-houses exhibiting nonsense of different kinds against us [Drury Lane] 'tis impossible we should subsist much longer. Both the Courts have forsaken us. All we can do is make the best of a losing Game.

Ballad-operas restored the theatres to profitability. The managers simply needed to find the next likely attraction to maintain levels of profitability, taking care not to offend either the person or office of the Lord Chamberlain.

The ballad-opera, so called from the town ditties it contained, combined elements of the old antimasques and the more modern corrective comedies, but took its style in part from the Italian opera.<sup>2</sup> In these entertainments the drama tended to be rather static, since much of the music was written not so much for the drama as to display the talents of the singers. These artists appeared in sumptuous costumerie, and the action ceased when they stepped forward to deliver their set-piece arias.

Gay's genius had been to write a play in which the action was clearly understood and well paced, but which was brought to a deliberate stop while the actor - no doubt striking a suitable pose as one of Handel's singers - in place of the aria delivered a satirical song. These short, pithy, epigrammatical verses parodied the popular ballads of the time, and ruthlessly emphasised Gay's satire against the Establishment,

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1. Letter from C. Cibber to Sir Richard Steele, MS 4058, f. 140. Additional, 12th December 1724.

2. See Sir W. Yonge's ballad-opera, The Jovial Crew (London, 1731), adapted from the play version by R. Brome, 1641.

and his ridicule of public taste for foreign entertainments.

The Beggar's Opera, the first of the new genre, was no more than a simple, three-act, moral comedy. The twist lay in the way that John Gay manipulated the conventions within the form. For example, the Vice-character (the highwayman MacHeath - drawn to represent Walpole) instead of being 'carried off' at the end of the play goes free. This allegory on the Court, and corruption in the Government, won so much favour with the public that Walpole took immediate action against the theatres.<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile the audience, sometimes knowing who was present in the theatre, found a two-fold pleasure in witnessing the discomfort of the victims.<sup>2</sup>

#### J. The adaptation of Jevon's farce as a full-length ballad-opera

There are no accounts in existence which reveal exactly how The Devil to Pay came to be written: nor, for the obvious reason of libel, are there any indications as to the identities of its intended victims. Nevertheless, the past record of the play, combined with its subject, leaves little doubt as to the general satire against the Quakers. Added to this, the cast list reveals the fact that the authors changed the emblematic names of the characters. For example: Sir Richard Lovemore - one who was noted for his benevolence - was turned into Sir John Loverule - a person with ambition to be in authority. By the same token, his wife also becomes someone with ambition to be in authority, a termagant and scold, moreover, a woman who needs to be purged of her evil ways.

Similarly Noddy, the chaplain, was re-named Ananias.<sup>3</sup> No doubt a reference to the biblical character who, failing to contribute the proceeds from the sale of his property to the church, and trying to conceal

1. John, Lord Hervey (ed. Rev. John Wilson Croker), Memoirs of the Reign of George the Second from his Accession to the Death of Queen Caroline (London, 1848), 2 vols. See i, pp. 120-1.

2. Gay, The Beggar's Opera (London, 1729 (New York, 1973)), p. xvii.

3. The name had already been employed by Jonson in his play The Alchemist (London, 1938).

his actions from the Elders, was struck down by the hand of God - before the eyes of his accusers. Thus, the new name amounted to a personification of the Anglican case against the Quakers.

The authors also altered the title from The Devil of a Wife, or A comical Transformation to The Devil to Pay, or the Wives metamorphos'd. This appears to have been a deliberate design to capitalise on the similarities between the new ballad-opera and a political pamphlet written during the election campaign of 1727. This had been published under the title of The Devil to Pay at the Court of St James. Examination of the contents page alone is sufficient to reveal the parallels to be drawn between the subject matter in the pamphlet and the main events in the ballad-opera:<sup>1</sup>

The Devil to pay at St James's: or

A full and true Account of the most horrid and bloody Battle between Madam Faustina and Madam Cuzzoni.

Also

of a skirmish between Signor Boschi and Signor Palmerini.

Moreover,

How Senesino has taken snuff, is going to leave the Opera, and sing Psalms at Henley's Oratory.

Also

About the Flying Man, and how the Doctor of St Martin's has very unkindly taken down the scaffold, and disappointed a world of Good Company.

As also

How a certain great Lady is gone mad for Love of William Gibson, the Quaker.

And

How the Wild Boy is come to Life again and has got a Dairy Maid with Child.

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1. The Devil to Pay at the Court of St James (London, 1727). The political pamphlet. See also Chetwood's ballad-opera, The Lovers' Opera (London, 1731), adapted from the play version by R. Brome, 1641.

In much the same way as the press had made use of the skirmish between Cuzzoni and Faustina, so the authors of The Devil to Pay appear to have connected the fights between Lady Loverule and her maids, and between Jobson and Noddy, with the previous altercation in the Haymarket. By coincidence, these events in the comedy correspond closely with similar episodes in The Beggar's Opera, with the political tract and, of course, with recent events in the real world. For by the time that The Devil to Pay received its first performance in 1731, the public brawl between Walpole and Townshend had certainly taken place. In addition to this general satire on the times, the authors of the ballad-opera sought to capitalise on further similarities that existed between the pamphlet and the ballad-opera. Thus, references to the doctor of St Martin's and the flying man correspond closely with the doctor and his spirit assistants representing the magical elements in the ballad-opera.

In the light of these circumstances, the prologue to the play is instructive:<sup>1</sup>

In ancient Greece the Comic Muse appear'd,  
Sworn foe to Vice, by Virtue's Friends rever'd;  
Impartial she indulg'd her noble Rage,  
And Satire was the Business of the Stage:  
5 No reigning Ill was from her Censure free,  
No Sex, no Age of Man, and no Degree;  
Wo'er by Passion was, or Folly, led,  
The laurell'd Chief, or sacerdotal Head,  
The pedant Sophist, or imperious Dame,  
10 She lash'd the Evil nor conceal'd the Name.

How hard the Fate of Wives in those sad Times,  
When saucy Poets wou'd chastise their Crimes!  
When each cornuting Mate, each Rampant Jilt,  
Had her Name branded on the Stage with Guilt!  
15 Each Fair may now the Comic Muse endure,  
And join the Laugh, though at her Self, secure.

Link'd to a patient Lord, this Night behold  
A wilful headstrong Termagant, and Scold;  
Whom, though her Husband did what Man could do,  
20 The Devil only could reclaim like you;  
Like you whose Virtues bright embellish Life,  
And add a Blessing to the Name of Wife.

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1. Coffey, The Devil to Pay (London, 1731), the prologue.

A merry wag to mend vexacious Brides  
 These Scenes begin, which shak'd your Father's Sides;  
 25 And we, obsequious to your Taste, prolong  
 Your Mirth, by courting the Supplies of Song:  
 If you approve, we our Desires obtain,  
 And by your Pleasure shall compute our Gain.

The play's reference to the Laurell'd Chief clearly identifies the principal object of its satire as being one in a position of authority. Intriguingly, the roles of Sir John Loverule and his termagant wife correspond closely with the veiled references to the leadership struggle which appeared in the opposition press at that time. Similarly, the alternative references to the sacerdotal head could also be taken to refer to any religious leader in the community unfortunate enough to attract the censure of the Stage. In the light of these opening lines it is most interesting to note that the pamphlet, The Devil to Pay at the Court of St James, made much of the William Gibson scandal, and also included a reference to the self-styled orator John Henley: both of whom were deemed to have brought their calling into question.<sup>1</sup>

The addition of forty-two songs also added considerably to the fun poked at the world in general. The most significant of the tunes, however, was reserved for the finale. For when Sir John sings his verse:<sup>2</sup>

May no Remembrance of past Time  
 Our present Pleasures soil  
 Be nought but Mirth and Joy a Crime  
 And Sporting all our Toil.

he sings these words to the tune of Hey Boys up go wee.

At that time, this tune was as well known as either Lillibulero or Joy to Great Caesar, tunes used to support the cause of the Whigs or the Tories at election times. The tune Hey Boys up go wee had been used for ballads sung in support of either side since the days of the civil war; and in eighteenth-century London it still served as a broadsheet ballad tune. Thus, the finale in The Devil to Pay, sung to this particular tune,

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1. The Devil to Pay at the Court of St James (London, 1727), Tract. Henley also won a lasting place in Pope's Dunciad (London, 1966), p. 517.
  2. Coffey, The Devil to Pay (London, 1731), the three-act version, p. 68.

put a final stamp on the character of the comedy for its contemporary audiences and, despite its scenes of harmless comedy, leaves a distinct impression that it was written in support of the Opposition: the Tory factions of the day.

In view of these facts, it is surprising to find that this ballad-opera was not performed at the Opposition theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields. Instead, it was first performed at the theatre in Drury Lane, where Colley Cibber, the Poet Laureate, was the Patentee. Though traditionally this was the house that performed plays written to support the Whigs, the fact was that, at the time in question, the theatre had been given over to the apprentices for the 'off' season, while the regular actors were on holiday. Thus, it was Theophilous Cibber, the son of the Patentee, then a young man of twenty-eight, who was responsible for the production.

#### K. Events surrounding the preparation of the afterpiece

The full-length version of The Devil to Pay received its première on the 6th August 1731 but, despite the long history of success enjoyed by Jevon's play, this performance - particularly young Mr Charke's Ananias - failed to please, and the audience expressed its disapproval loudly enough for the piece to be taken off the stage forthwith. No records survive to indicate whether or not the piece was also suppressed, although this in itself means little at a time when a complaint made in person was sufficient grounds for the Lord Chamberlain to act. Whatever the reason for its offence, if the piece was to remain on the stage some action had to be taken. Therefore "it was cut short, that part [Ananias] left out, and so reduced to one-Act, which was done by Mr Theophilous Cibber."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Scouten, The London Stage (Carbondale, Illinois, 1961), pt iii, p. 50. See also T. Whincop, Scanderberg, or Love and Liberty to which are added a list of all the Poets dramatic Authors with some account of their lives; and all the dramattick pieces ever published in the English Language to the year 1747 (London, 1747). In the Dictionary of National Biography

The fact that Theophilous Cibber elected to take this particular course of action is of interest. The play had always been a risk because it contravened the terms of the Theatre Patents under which both Lincoln's Inn Fields and Drury Lane operated. These stated on behalf of the crown that:<sup>1</sup>

Wee do hereby command and enjoyn that no new play or any old or revived play be acted under the Authority hereby granted containing any passages or expressions offensive to Piety or good manners untill the same be corrected and purged by the said Governors from all such offensive and scandalous passages.

Cibber's decision to cut the play down to a one-act afterpiece would have been more understandable following a successful run.<sup>2</sup> Then the afterpiece would appear by popular demand. What he did was to follow the precise dictates of the Theatre-Patent cutting out all references to matters "offensive to Piety". Significantly, since there had been no clause inserted regarding politics, no enforcement on these grounds was possible, and this omission left Cibber with a viable miniature which, though robbed of its "sacerdotal head", presumably retained all its references to the "laurell'd chiefs". With these alterations complete, the afterpiece received its première on the 16th August 1731 - barely two weeks after the original débâcle.

L. The Devil to Pay, or the Wives metamorphos'd (Afterpiece): the plot after the cutting process

When the full-length ballad-opera was adapted as an afterpiece,

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see the entries under "Coffey, Charles", pp. 199-210, and "Mottley, John", pp. 264-68. These articles supply the only detailed accounts of this performance. The author contributing the article on Mottley's life concludes that the list of dramatic authors attached to Scanderberg is the work of John Mottley. Certainly, the article on Mottley includes various details that would have interested few people.

1. P.R.O. C.66/350/ Theatre Patent issued to Booth, Wilks and Cibber (1715). See also Killigrew's Patent issued by Charles II, Rawl. Ms. C. 182.

2. For example, The Beggar's Wedding ran for thirty nights before being cut down to a single act. Thereafter, it continued its success as a popular afterpiece acted under the title of Phebe.

THE  
DEVIL to PAY:  
OR, THE  
Wives Metamorphos'd.  
AN  
OPERA.

As it is Perform'd at the  
THEATRE-ROYAL in *Drury-Lane*,

By His MAJESTY's Servants.

---

*In nova fert animus mutatas dicere formas  
Corpora ————— Ovid.*

---

*With the MUSICK prefix'd to each SONG.*



L O N D O N:

Printed for J. WATTS at the Printing-Office in  
*Wild-Court near Lincoln's-Inn Fields.*

---

MDCCXLVIII. . [Price One Shilling.



Jevon's original characterisation embodying the seven deadly sins was lost. Similarly, with the part of Noddy, the chaplain, and all other references to religion omitted from the play, much of the original purpose of the satire was lost. Notwithstanding, the piece still retained enough of its original fire to preserve it from descending to the level of buffoonery.

The play's secondary theme, the subjugation of Pride and Free-will which underpinned the scenes shared by Jobson and Lady Loverule, were invaluable in this respect, sharpening the pace of the slapstick comedy as the wilful termagent is tamed. At the same time, Nell's sudden elevation to the squirearchy exposes her to a way of life for which she is unprepared, and results in an appealing episode which consisted of a comedy of manners. Otherwise, these alterations left the order of events unchanged and it is easy to observe similarities with Jevon's original play, the way in which musical interest was added to the action, and a fresh significance given to its scenes of comedy.

#### The synopsis

Nell stands in her cottage pleading with Jobson to keep her company at home until, losing his temper, he threatens her with his belt (He that has the best Wife). Nell accepts his authority, and Jobson sets out for the traditional Christmas party being held for the tenants at Sir John Loverule's house.

There, the servants enjoy an evening free of their terrible employer, Lady Loverule, who is spending the night visiting her relations in the company of her husband. Their expressions of discontent are cut short by the arrival of the villagers led by Jobson, who bring with them a blind fiddler.

The butler, having welcomed them, bids the servants bring in the party fare in a grand, solemn procession, and gives the honour of singing the song in praise of punch to Jobson (Come Jolly Bacchus). The

butler responds with a loyal toast to the king and all his royal family (Here's a good Health to the King). Upon this, general scenes of drinking and dancing ensue.

Lady Loverule's unexpected return brings these scenes of celebration to an abrupt stop. Giving vent to her temper, she rages at the profanity of Christmas and the abomination of dancing to a fiddle, and sets to work driving the unwanted guests from her house, to the chagrin of Sir John (Ye Gods! ye gave to me a Wife). Meanwhile Lady Loverule continues beating those about her until she comes upon Jobson, who in a moment of irony delivers his song once more (He that has the best Wife), and coming upon the blind fiddler she breaks his instrument over his head, leaving Sir John to compensate the man for his loss. At this, Sir John resolves to be separated from his wife for good (Of the States in Life so various).

At this point, knocking announces the arrival of a passing magician, known as the doctor, seeking shelter for the night. Before Sir John can intervene his wife, still seething with rage, drives the man away, but Sir John, deeply embarrassed by these events, directs him to the cobbler's cottage.

Alone in her cottage, Nell makes the best of being alone, until the doctor arrives at her door. She makes him welcome, and he is content to listen to her daydreaming of a life of luxury. As he listens to her, an idea unfolds in his mind, and reading her hand he foretells of a future life of happiness and ease. Nell, captivated by this promise of good fortune sings with delight (My swelling Heart now leaps with Joy). The festive mood is shattered upon Jobson's return, for seeing Nell alone with a stranger, he accuses them of cuckolding him. The doctor's protests are of no avail, and to save her further trouble he leaves.

Once outside, he summons his assistants from the spirit-world, Abishog and Nadir, instructing them to change Lady Loverule into the cobbler's wife, and Nell into the lady of the manor - so that no-one will

know of the transformation (My little Spirits now Appear). They depart in the midst of a violent thunderstorm.

Dawn finds Jobson dressed and working in his stall (Of all the Trades from East to West). Lady Loverule, unused to this kind of disturbance, awakes and fractiously calls for her maids, and upon finally waking fears she has been kidnapped. She instantly threatens Jobson with a whipping. Unmoved by her threats he continues singing (In Bath a wanton Wife did dwell). At last, Lady Loverule rouses Jobson's temper at which point there commences a furious battle of wills. This is won - after some difficulty - by Jobson (Let Matters of State). Jobson's suspicion that his wife has taken leave of her senses is finally confirmed when she takes advantage of an opportunity to run away from the cottage.

Nell's waking stands in complete contrast. Dazzled by the fineries of the boudoir, she believes that she has arrived in paradise. Meanwhile the servants, as yet unaware of their changed fortunes, are reluctant to set the day's events in motion, and approach the levee with some trepidation. Therefore their delight is all the greater when they discover the change that has come over their employer, for instead of the usual rain of blows they hear a novel sound - words of praise.

In spite of the servants' obvious respect for her, Nell is far from confident in her new surroundings. This leads to some amusing moments. For example, faced with a list of wines of which she has never heard, she leaves the choice to her butler, and when her maid offers her morning chocolate Nell thinks it is another kind of bonnet. The servants, relieved not to have been beaten or abused, put these gaffes down to the general change in her behaviour, while Nell, left alone, reflects on the dramatic change in her position (Tho' late I was a Cobbler's Wife). Significantly, while dressing, she catches a glimpse of her reflection in the mirror, and notices that it is not her own likeness, but puts this phenomenon down to the effects of the flattering glasses of which

she has heard (Fine ladies with an artful Grace).<sup>1</sup>

Returning from hunting, Sir John is surprised at receiving his servants' news and pleased to find his wife's manner towards him completely transformed while Nell, unused to being treated so well, instantly falls in love with Sir John (Oh charming cunning Man). Sir John's response confirms his newly-found happiness (Was ever Man possest of so sweet, so kind a Wife).

This sentimental mood is broken by the arrival of Lady Loverule, distraught at not being recognised either by her servants, nor even her husband. When Jobson arrives to take her home, the company marvel at the sad change in his wife and persuade him to treat her gently, for the sake of her sickness.

As the couple depart, the doctor arrives and confesses the secret of his revenge to Sir John: he assures him that nothing untoward has befallen his wife - other than being cured of her faults. With the spell now broken, and the two women restored to their husbands, Sir John rewards Jobson with £500 for his trouble, and the piece ends amid joyful scenes of celebration, as the villagers re-assemble to congratulate their landlord and employer on his good fortune (Let ev'ry Face with Smiles appear).

#### M. Problems of authorship

Audiences reacted favourably, and before long it was being played to packed houses. The exact authorship, by now, was in some doubt. Jevon had written the original dialogue and one of the songs, Coffey and Mottley had contributed most of the songs - and because of this they had made the original selection of tunes.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, Colley Cibber and Lord Rochester had contributed one song each.

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1. Nell. ... But great Ladies, they say, have flattering Glasses, that shew them far unlike themselves, whilst poor Folks Glasses represent them e'en just as they are.

Jevon, The Devil to Pay (London, 1731), p. 22.

2. He that has the best Wife survived from the original production in 1685/6.

At the same time, Theophilous Cibber had secured the services of Seedo, an expatriate German musician. Little is known about his early life beyond the fact that he earned a precarious living writing music for the London stage. Probably as a result, his name has been linked with that of Pepusch.

During the 1720s Seedo worked in the Little Theatre in the Haymarket, and in 1727 he married Maria Manina, an opera singer. This was the same theatre in which Coffey had enjoyed a measure of success with The Beggar's Wedding in 1729, which Mottley repeated with Penelope in 1730. In view of this coincidence, it seems likely that the three men were already acquainted before Seedo was invited to oversee the music for the production of The Devil to Pay at the Drury Lane Theatre in 1731. He arranged the music for a number of ballad-operas during his association with the theatre between 1731-34, and composed at least one masque, Venus, Cupid and Hymen, staged at Drury Lane on the 5th May 1733. In 1736, deeply in debt, he was fortunate enough to obtain employment at the Prussian court in Potsdam, and spent the remainder of his life in Germany, dying on or about 1750.<sup>1</sup>

Seedo composed an overture for The Devil to Pay, which has since been lost, and the music for one of the songs. In these circumstances, the authors did not receive their customary benefit on the third night. Instead, they paid a bond to the theatre and received their benefit on the thirty-third night. By all accounts, however, the theatre was full and, as a result, the authors were well satisfied with the collection.<sup>2</sup> Besides making the names of the authors, the piece also made the reputation of Miss Rastor who created the role of Nell, and Mr Harper who won great applause playing the part of Jobson.<sup>3</sup>

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1. The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians (London, 1980), 20 vols. See "Seedo".

2. Whincop, Scanderberg (London, 1747), pp. 199-201.

3. Chetwode, General History of the Stage (London, 1749), 2 vols. See ii, pp. 67 and 127.

By all accounts, Colley Cibber, the patentee of Drury Lane, launched Miss Kitty Rastor (1711-1785) on her career in the theatre when she was seventeen years old. Among her many talents, she was possessed of a fine singing voice, a facetious sense of humour and a vivid power of impersonation.<sup>1</sup> So that when Theophilous Cibber decided to stage The Devil to Pay, Miss Rastor was the natural choice to play the role of Nell, and following its disastrous first night she was the chief means of securing the success of the afterpiece version.<sup>2</sup> The account of dramatic authors attached to Whincop's Scanderberg reports that her wages were doubled as a direct result of her success. While her fame, during the course of a long career, spread far enough to merit reports appearing in the foreign press of the day.<sup>3</sup>

Mr John Harper had been a loyal member of the Drury Lane company for many years and died of a stroke in 1742. During his career, Mr Harper had built a reputation as one of the leading actors of comedy of his times. Already renowned for his interpretation of Falstaff, he was possessed of an exceptional talent for exciting his audiences to laughter. Consequently, his portrayal of Jobson in The Devil to Pay was without equal, and added even more to his popularity.

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1. Tate Wilkinson recalled, "her song from the Italian Opera, where she was free with a good ridiculous take-off of Signora Mignotti, was universally encored." W. Clark Russell, Representative Actors (London, n.d.).

2. This was not the only occasion when Miss Rastor's personal appeal had won over an audience. During the première of an earlier ballad-opera, Love in a Riddle, attempts by a cabal to secure its failure were defeated only by the direct appeal of Miss Rastor's ability as a performer. Although the author reporting the failure of the full-length version of The Devil to Pay makes no mention of such a campaign, in view of the play's subject and the fact of it being staged in a licensed theatre (viz. with the approval of the king) it is quite possible that its première was similarly ruined by a cabal: then a common feature of theatre life.

Scouten, The London Stage (Carbondale, Illinois, 1961), pt 11, pp. 1006-7.

3. Unterhaltungen (Hamburg, 1766-9), 8 Bde. See Bd 11, pt 1, pp. 251-3.

#### N. Immediate and lasting success

It is clear from the scale of the success that Cibber's ruthless cutting had, if anything, made the piece more manageable, giving it pace - while the music gave more emphasis to its sentimental interest. Nell's sudden promotion to a station for which she had no training held out ample opportunity to introduce burlesque, and it was in itself an apt satire on the nouveau riche of the day.<sup>1</sup> Jobson's role as an agent of correction also received added emphasis, besides which there was no shortage of slapstick comedy during the course of the action. More surprisingly, with some two-thirds of the original dialogue discarded, an unexpected degree of unity remained, especially when it is remembered that Cibber had not added any dialogue - in an attempt to link those parts of the play which remained after cutting; nor was this, in any way, one of the lightweight pieces serving only as a showcase in which to display the talents of a popular actor of the day.

Undoubtedly, part of its success stemmed from the original play. As already mentioned, Jevon had taken his style from the example set by Ben Jonson.<sup>2</sup> Apart from his conventional characters, such as sharp-tongued wives and hen-pecked husbands, Jonson also introduced complicated plots, making use of various sub-plots. In this case, Jevon built his original play around the familiar theme of the seven deadly sins; and, indeed, his play progresses satisfactorily towards a denouement in which Temptation is vanquished by Virtue, and in which Humility overcomes Pride: in which Justice rewards the honest endeavour of Everyman. In this way Jevon, like Jonson before him, made very good use of the sub-plot as a theatrical device.

In the original full-length comedy, Nell accepts that she must obey

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1. The nouveau riche were the rising moneyed class of the times, who were not quite sure how to behave in their new circumstances, i.e. moneyed as opposed to landed gentry.

2. See above, p. 9.

her husband, Jobson, subjugating her own will for the general good. Clearly, Lady Lovemore takes the opposite view and leaves a trail of misery in her wake. After the transformation scene two centres of interest emerge: the manor house and the cobbler's cottage, where after a considerable amount of correction Lady Lovemore is cured of her faults, in the form of her wilfulness. As a result of this, contemporary audiences witnessed the titanic struggle that took place between Jobson, the agent of correction, and Lady Lovemore, the symbol of wilfulness. The triumph of Good over Evil provides a complete theme. In the original version it was the play within the play, but also it had the advantage of including both the party scene and that most satisfying of finales - the happy ending. Thus, the afterpiece was already contained entirely within the original play.

Whincop indicates that serious critics of the play judged it poor on account of its unnatural scenes of magic, but this view was countered by the argument that if they could be so transformed, then what they say and do would, indeed, be natural.<sup>1</sup> It could well be inferred from this that, with the references to religion removed, the satire was softened to the point where the piece became little more than a slapstick comedy - albeit one with a powerful moral.

#### 0. The music

In addition to the text, much of the entertainment value of a ballad-opera depended on the author's selection of apt and memorable tunes. These are clearly labelled in Coffey's text with the song title from which the tune is taken. Furthermore, it is clear that the aesthetic argument as to whether (or not) the piece, with its scenes of magic, was a 'natural' entertainment did not affect the success of the play. This issue was finally settled at the box office. In any case, Jevon's play had

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1. Whincop, Scanderberg (London, 1747), p. 200.



included musical episodes from the outset so that they arose out of the context of the action. The question remaining is whether (or not) the tunes were selected merely for their appeal (and imposed on the action) or did other factors play a part in their selection?

Although Theophilous Cibber had cut The Devil to Pay down to a single act, Coffey and Mottley, having parodied the ballads of their choice, had also selected the tunes, though it was Cibber who engaged the services of the musician Seedo to oversee the musical arrangements for performance. Added to this, fourteen of the sixteen numbers published were retained from the full-length ballad-opera version that had been booed off the stage, several of which had been used in other entertainments: and in any case, they had been employed both for their comic effect, and sometimes to ridicule authority. Originally the songs had been chosen partly for the appeal of their music, but often because the sense of their existing words highlighted some aspect of the comedy, or intensified the satire.<sup>1</sup> For this reason, there is often an underlying connection between the original songs that supplied the tunes, and the dramatic context in which the authors employed them; linking the sense of the original with both the new stanzas and the characters responsible for their delivery on stage.

A table of the songs used in The Devil to Pay  
together with the songs they parodied

Air 1	<u>He that has the best wife: p. 2.</u>
Jobson	Tune - "The Twitcher", <u>English Songs</u> , H1601, vol. i, f. 12. Used also by J. Mottley in his ballad-opera <u>Penelope</u> (London, 1728), <u>Musical Supplement</u> , p. 12.
Air 2	<u>Come jolly Bacchus God of Wine: p. 4.</u>
Jobson	Tune - "Charles of Sweden".

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1. Reference to the accompanying list of songs reveals that three had been used in earlier ballad-operas written by the authors. Thus, Mottley had used the tune known as The Twitcher (No. 1) and Now Ponder well ye Parents dear (No. 10) in Penelope, while Coffey had used Come let us Prepare (No. 11) in The Beggar's Wedding.

- Air 3      Here's a good Health to the King: p. 5.  
Butler      New song (music unknown).
- Air 4      Ye Gods! you gave to me a Wife: p. 6.  
Sir John    Sung to music newly composed by Seedo.
- Air 5      Of the States in Life so various: p. 8.  
Sir John    Tune - "Of all the Comforts I miscarried". This song is taken from D'Urfey's Pills to purge Melancholy (London, 1719-20), 6 vols, see ii, p. 137.
- Air 6      Grant me ye Pow'rs! but this request: p. 9.  
Sir John    Tune - "The contented country farmer".
- Air 7      My swelling Heart now leaps with Joy: p. 11.  
Nell        Tune - "Send home my long stray'd Eyes", also known as "The Re-proach", Watts, Musical Miscellany (London, 17 -), 6 vols, see i, pp. 52-3.
- Air 8      My little Spirits now appear: p. 12.  
Doctor      Matthew Locke, Macbeth Music, "Witch's song".
- Air 9      Of all the Trades from East to West: p. 14.  
Jobson      Tune - "Charming Sally", English Songs, H1601, vil. ii, f. 491.
- Air 10     In Bath a wanton Wife did dwell: p. 15.  
Jobson      Tune - "Now ponder well ye Parents dear". This tune is also used by Mottley in Penelope (London, 1728), Musical Supplement, p. 12. The tune appears under its alternative title "The Children in the Wood".
- Air 11     Let Matters of State: p. 17.  
Jobson      Tune - "Come let us prepare". Also used by coffey in The Beggar's Wedding (London, 1729), p. 20. See also English Songs, H1601, vol. i, f. 87.
- Air 12     Tho' late I was a Cobbler's Wife: p. 20.  
Nell        Tune - "What tho' I am a country Lass". This is from the play The provok'd Husband by Sir John Vanbrugh (1697).
- Air 13     Fine Ladies with an artful Grace: p. 22.  
Nell        Tune - "When I was Dame of Honour", English Songs, H1601, vol. ii, f. 388.
- Air 14     O charming Cunning Man, p. 23.  
Nell        Tune - "Twas within a Furlong of Edinburgh Town" by H. Purcell. See D'Urfey, Pills to purge Melancholy (London, 1719-20), vol i, p. 327.
- Air 15     Was ever Man possest of so sweet, so kind a Wife: p. 25.  
Sir John    Duet  
& Nell
- Air 16     Finale: Let ev'ry Face with Smiles appear: p. 30.  
Lady,       Tune - "Hey Boys up go we", A Collection of English Ballads and Broadsheets etc., C.114.i.4 (59). See Appendix I.  
Sir John  
Jobson

The musical interest is distributed unevenly between the characters. Jobson, the comic lead, is given five numbers, Nell sings only four numbers but shares a duet with Sir John Loverule, who in addition sings three numbers on his own account. This leaves the doctor's song, the butler's loyal toast, and the finale, shared by Sir John, his wife and Jobson.

Responsibility for the success of the opening number falls squarely on the shoulders of the actor playing the comic leading role, Jobson. The song arises out of his need to threaten Nell with his strap before he goes off to the party. The song allows the cobbler to offer the benefit of marriage guidance to the audience:<sup>1</sup>

He that has the best Wife,  
She's the Plague of his Life;  
But for her that will scold and will quarrel,  
Let him cut her off short  
Of her Meat and her Sport,  
And ten times a day hoop her Barrel brave Boys.  
And ten times a day hoop her Barrel.

This was sung to the tune The Twitcher, sung by Mr Pack in Loncoln's Inn Fields.<sup>2</sup> It contains the story of how a young swain robs the damsel of his choice of her defences - by removing her mystical twitcher. Thus, the oblique reference to curbing the will of the damsel contained in the

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1. See Appendix I, p. 1.

2. At the time in question (1731) the word "twitcher" was so widely used that its precise meaning within the context of Mr Pack's song remains somewhat obscure. For example, obstinate animals (hogs and horses) were controlled by means of twitchers attached to their noses. The word was also applied to tongs used to crimp pies, children's tops being whipped and the living flesh of murderers being torn from their bodies by means of red-hot pinchers. Intriguingly, women were in the habit of consulting a kind of oracle also known as a twitcher.

The words of Jevon's song are less ambiguous. Jevon's references to whipping - hooping her barrel - are entirely in keeping with the general sense of Mr Pack's original version of the song (viz. bringing an obstinate woman under control), though his song appears to refer to the more obscure fortune-telling device - her "mystical twitcher". Greater Oxford Dictionary. See also N. Bailey's Dictionarium Britannicum; or a more compleat universal etymological English Dictionary (London, 1736). See also vol. ii, Appendix I, p. 2.

song nicely matches the mood of the action and it is a relatively simple matter to make the connection between correcting an erring wife by depriving her of her pleasures and winning the damsel by depriving her of her defences. Moreover, the general comic nature of Mr Pack's ballad must have given the actor playing the role of Jobson scope to tease his audience with all the innuendo suggested by his verse - already reinforced by existing associations connected with the tune in the minds of the audience.

The party scene needed music to decorate its mock-pageantry when the servants bring in their dishes of Christmas fare - presumably in reference to the scenes of revelry traditionally witnessed at the Inns of Court.<sup>1</sup> Charles of Sweden, already known as a drinking song, would serve very well in this capacity to give added effect to Jobson's tribute to Bacchus. The butler had previously followed Jobson's drinking song with the loyal toast "to the King and all his royal Family". It was at this point that one of the two new songs was introduced. Intriguingly, the words of this song:<sup>2</sup>

Here's a good Health to the King,  
And send him prosperous Reign;

serve a genuine dramatic purpose in extending the jollity and gaiety of the party scene. However, in the light of events it may be that Colley Cibber, the patentee of the theatre, saw a need to flatter the king's majesty by way of providing a legal safeguard.

When he had written and acted his play The Non-Juror in 1717, its subject had been its defence; for in acting a play that was outrageously 'scandalous' to religion, he openly contravened the terms of his own theatre-Patent, but in The Non-Juror:<sup>3</sup>

acted soon after the settling of the Troubles which

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1. J. Evelyn (ed. A. Dobson), The Diary of John Evelyn 1664-1676 (London 1906), 3 vols. See ii, p. 285.

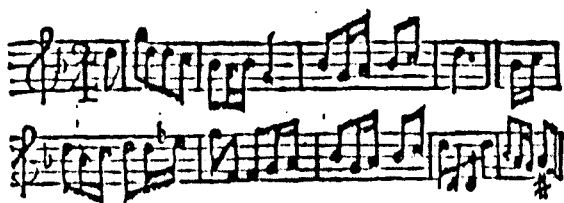
2. Jevon, The Devil to Pay (London, 1731), p. 5.

3. B. Victor, The History of the Theatre in London and Dublin, from the year 1730 to the present time, To which is added an annual register of

attended that desparate Rebellion in 1715; and as non-Jurors and Jacobites were at that Time, Plenty in London ... This Play was properly supported by the Whigs and all friends of the Hanoverian Succession ... which got the Author the Laureateship.

In the light of events surrounding the first performance of The Devil to Pay, there could have been few better placed than Colley Cibber, the Poet Laureate, and holder of the king's Patent, to recognise the value of such a public demonstration of loyalty to the king's majesty. Therefore, in spite of the fact that no authorship is claimed for the song, this seems most likely to have been Colley Cibber's contribution to the music, referred to by the author of Whincop's list.<sup>1</sup>

Sir John's three songs are given out early in the play and arise out of his unfortunate matrimonial situation. The first of these is the second of the two new and anonymous songs. By all accounts, this is the song which must have been written by Lord Rochester fifty years before, and which was set to music by Seedo.<sup>2</sup> His setting reflects the kind of expertise to be expected from an expatriate musician with his considerable experience of preparing music for use in the theatre. The style both complements the elegant witticism contained in the verse and, at the same time, it provides a setting that a person of Sir John's standing might be expected to sing. Apart from this, the song allows Sir John to reveal to the audience his dismay at finding himself in such circumstances:<sup>3</sup>




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all the Plays & etc, performed at the Theatres Royal in London, from the Year 1712 (London 1761), 2 vols. See i, p. 95.

1. Whincop, Scanderberg (London, 1747), p. 199.

2. Ibid.

3. Coffey, The Devil to Pay (London, 1731), p. 6. The complete tune with its bass is included in Appendix II, p. 308.

Ye Gods! ye gave to me a Wife,  
 Out of your Grace and Favour;  
 To be the Comfort of my Life,  
 And I was glad to have her:  
 But if your Providence Divine,  
 For greater Bliss design her,  
 To obey your Wills at any Time  
 I am ready to resign her.

Meanwhile Lady Loverule is busily engaged in vanquishing her 'unwanted guests', while Sir John reveals his emotional state to the audience by means of the following stanza:<sup>1</sup>

Of the States in Life so various  
 Marriage, sure, is most precarious;  
 ....  
 That nought but Death can set us clear;  
 ....  
                                 Were Men wary  
                                 How they marry,  
 We should not be by half so full of Misery.

This song, set to a tune by Purcell, was originally given under the title The Curtain Lecture: the first two lines of the old version set the general tone:<sup>2</sup>

Of all the Comforts I miscarried  
 When I played the Sot and married.

In its original version, this song takes the form of a duet in which the wife gets as good as she gives - until:<sup>3</sup>

She    'Tis to grieve me, thus you leave me.  
          Was I, was I made a Wife to lye alone.

He     From your Arms myself divorcing,  
          I this Morn must ride a-Coursing.

At this point in the play Lady Loverule refuses the doctor shelter for the night. For Sir John this breach of good manners, not to mention obligation from one of her social standing, proves too much for his forbearance, and with the subject of divorce already established by association in the previous song, he resolves to be separated once and for

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1. Coffey, The Devil to Pay (London, 1731), p. 8.

2. T. D'Urfey, Pills to purge Melancholy (London, 1719-20), 6 vols. See ii, p. 137. Drawing the curtains of the old four-poster bed could give rise to an uncomfortable prelude to sleep. Hence the song.

3. Ibid.

all from his termagant Wife:<sup>1</sup>

Grant me ye Pow'rs! but this Request,  
And let who will the World contest;  
Convey her to some distant Shore,  
Where I may ne'er behold her more;  
Or let me to some Cottage fly,  
In freedom's Arms to live and die.

Sir John's music allows him to comment on his own unhappy marriage and, in the play, his philosophising is confined to this area of human affairs. Interestingly enough, the addition of music does nothing to strengthen the character, instead it exploits the weakness of his position at that point in the action.

The authors' choice of music for Nell is instructive. In a sense, the action now centres on her 'adventures' as lady of the manor. Her first song reveals the pleasure she feels at the prospect of her coming riches:<sup>2</sup>

My swelling Heart now leaps with Joy,  
And Riches all my Thoughts employ;  
No more shall People call me Nell,  
Her Ladyship will do as well,  
Deck'd in my golden rich Array,  
I'll in my Chariot roll away,  
And shine at Ring, at Ball, and Play.

These words parody a song then well known as The Reproach, in which the general themes of deceit and falsehood are generally to the fore:<sup>3</sup>

Yet send me back my Heart and Eyes  
For I'll know all thy Falsities;

The doctor, having foretold of coming luxury, now weaves his spell with the aid of his spirits, Abishog and Nadir. This scene takes place to the strains of Matthew Locke's The Witch's Dance from his incidental music for Macbeth. This is a typical choice, especially since the scene affords plenty of scope for posture dancing, the inclusion of additional 'furies' and any other suitable elements leading up to a climactic thunderstorm.

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1. Coffey, The Devil to Pay (London, 1731), p. 9. See also Appendix I, p. 274.
  2. Coffey, The Devil to Pay (London, 1731), p. 11. See also Appendix I, p. 275.
  3. Watts Musical Miscellany (London 17-), 6 vols. See 1, pp. 52-3, and Appendix I, p. 276.

After the transformation scene, Nell continues her fall into temptation:<sup>1</sup>

Tho' late I was a Cobler's Wife,  
In Cottage most obscur-a  
In plain-stuff Gown, and short ear'd Coif,  
Hard Labour did endur-a  
The scene is chang'd, I'm alter'd quite,  
And from poor Humble Nell-a  
I'll learn to Dance, to read, and write,  
And from all bear the Bell-a.

This parodies the song from The Provok'd Husband already associated with the ambition to rise above one's allotted station:<sup>2</sup>

What tho' they call me Country Lass,  
I read it plainly in my Glass  
That for a Duchess I might pass.

As to the deceit of using make-up:<sup>3</sup>

Fine Ladies with an Artful Grace  
Disquire each native Feature,  
While flatt'ring Glasses shew the Face  
As made by Art not Nature  
But we poor folks in home-spun Grey  
By Patch nor Washes tainted,  
Look fresh and sweeter far than they,  
That still are finely painted.

A fine moralising verse set to a tune of a song which dealt with the subject of dispelling illusion: Dame of Honour:<sup>4</sup>

Since now the World's turn'd upside down,  
And all things chang'd in Nature,  
As if a doubt were newly grown  
We had the same Creator.

Nell's fourth number, the song she sings when she falls in love with Sir John, explores a different kind of falsehood:<sup>5</sup>

O charming cunning-Man! thou has been wondrous kind,  
And all thy golden Words do now prove true I find:

...

My Rock, and Reel,  
And Spinning-Wheel  
And Husband I despise;  
Then Jobson, now adieu,  
Thy cobling still pursue,

For hence I will not, cannot no, nor must not buckle to.

1. Coffey, The Devil to Pay (London, 1731), p. 20. See also Appendix I, p. 289.

2. Sir John Vanbrugh, The provok'd Husband (London, 1975), p. 152.

3. Coffey, The Devil to Pay (London, 1731), p. 22. See also Appendix I, p. 292.

4. English Songs (British Library) H1601, 2 vols. See ii, f. 388, also Appendix I, p. 293.

5. Coffey, The Devil to Pay (London, 1731), p. 23. See also Appendix I, p. 295.



Similar sentiments are to be found in the song T'was within a Furlong of Edinburgh Town. In its original version this was a seventeenth-century theatre song set to music by Purcell in the Scottish style, and it tells of a lowland girl singing of her intention to desert her darling 'Jackey' for the more glamorous attractions of town life.

From this résumé it can be seen that the authors systematically chose to parody songs so as to exploit associations already attached to the tunes; in each case where the tune was borrowed, the authors sought to maximise the impact of their own simple verses by delivering them to a tune already associated with the subject in the minds of the audience. In the case of the songs given to the doctor and the butler, these are largely atmospheric, but in the case of Sir John they allow him to philosophise on his situation.

Nell's songs, on the other hand, are given to the kind of homespun moralising to be expected from those in contact with the day-to-day business of running a small household. To such people, the rich appear unduly wasteful. Yet this artless, even naive, exterior is entirely in agreement with the function of Nell's character in the play; she is, after all, the Virtue-character. Jobson's role, on the other hand, serves a very different purpose: his corrective role is apparent from the outset. Coffey and Mottley simply added to it:<sup>1</sup>

Of all the Trades from East to West,  
The Cocker's past contending,  
Is like in time to prove the best,  
Which ev'ry Day is mending.  
How great his Praise who can amend  
The Soals of all his Neighbours  
Nor is unmindful of his End  
But to his Last still labours.

This song is set to the tune of Charming Sally. Yet there appears to be no connection between Jobson's homily and the simple love song

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1. Coffey, The Devil to Pay (London, 1731), p. 14. See also Appendix I, p. 279.

contained in the original song, Sally in our Alley:<sup>1</sup>

Of all the Girls that are so Smart,  
There's none like pretty Sally:  
She is the darling of my Heart,  
She lives in our Alley.

This choice of tune is made even more puzzling with the discovery that Charming Sally was merely one of a number of songs written during the 1720s, apparently arising out of some point of contention in the preceding song:<sup>2</sup>

The Men of Humour, Wit and Parts,  
Of each polite Theatre,  
Made me the Darling of their Hearts,  
No Toast e'er Pleased 'em better.

The reference to "the men of each polite Theatre" seems to provide a touchstone to this puzzle, pointing once more to the opera singer, Cuzzoni. This connection is made clearer in a subsequent version:<sup>3</sup>

Since Sally's Charms so long hath been  
The Theam of Courtt and Citty.  
Pray give me leave to sing a song,  
And praise a Girl more pretty.

Clearly, if Jobson's songs were intended to underline the traditional function of a fool's role, viz., instructing his 'master' in the ways of the world, then even though it is impossible to understand all of Coffey's allusions, these ballads hint at an interesting explanation, for this skein of references appears in another ballad in the following form:<sup>4</sup>

Three Sallys of London Town,  
Are gotten to high renown.  
There's Callico Sally all light,  
Sally Salisbury learn'd to fight,  
But Sally Cutz-; with two Eunochs, stony,  
But Sally Cutz-; with two Eunochs, stony,  
Do's Sing, do's Sing, do's Sing, do's Sing, do's Sing.

Thus the song contained one or two familiar allusions commonly found in the Opposition press, and used by journalists. The sharp political

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1. English Songs (British Library) H1601, ii, f. 339.

2. Ibid., f. 491.

3. Ibid., f. 398.

4. Ibid., f. 464. See also Appendix I, pp. 279-84.

differences between the City and the Court were one thing, the men of each polite theatre was another. The song apparently poked fun at the recent spirited defence of Cuzzoni's honour, when the Earl of Salisbury had fought a duel on behalf of the singer. Even though some years had elapsed between the time when these songs were written and the adaptation of Jevon's play in 1731, the general meaning of the songs retained an element of topicality. In this way, the 'darling' of the song in The Devil to Pay is clearly intended to be Jobson, who by means of his trade can mend the soles (souls) of his neighbours. Thus, the song-tune once more appears to have been chosen to give added emphasis to Jobson's corrective role, which is highlighted again in his last song, sung to the tune of Come let us prepare:<sup>1</sup>

Let Matters of State  
Disquiet the Great  
The Cobler has nought to perplex him;  
Has nought but his Wife  
To ruffle his Life  
And she he can strap if she vex him.

He's out of the Pow'r  
Of Fortune, that Whore,  
Since low as can be, she has thrust him  
From Duns he's secure,  
For being so poor  
There's none to be found that will trust him.

This is much softer in tone than the version Coffey wrote to the same tune in The Beggar's Wedding. In this piece, Chaunter turns to Quarum and sings:<sup>2</sup>

Pray good Mr Bluff  
Why in such a Huff!  
Upbraid me not with my Condition  
Tho' Justice of Peace  
I would not change Place  
With you for your duty Commission.

The reference to Mr Bluff in The Beggar's Wedding reveals the extent to which authors were prepared to go in pursuit of their satirical aims,

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1. Coffey, The Devil to Pay, (London, 1731), p. 17.

2. Coffey, The Beggar's Wedding (London 1729), p. 20.

for Mr Bluff appears in another guise in John Gay's piece, The Beggar's Opera. Early in act one Peachum is to be found musing over his list of villains, searching for a name that will make a good, entertaining execution. This list of candidates is nothing more than a list of nicknames - Tom Tipple, ... Robin of Bagshot, alias Gorgon: all nicknames referring to Walpole. Among these, Bluff Bob refers to his ruddy complexion.<sup>1</sup>

The conventional role of the 'fool' is an ancient tradition but one that irritated Walpole and in private he took measures against the theatres, though not with much success until 1737, when the Lord Chamberlain's Act was passed. In the light of this situation, the writers' choice of tunes for Jobson's songs is significant. The music extended his corrective role beyond the apron of the stage in much the same way as Gay had achieved in The Beggar's Opera; audiences were entertained by the gibes directed at the public figures of the day.

The satire, however, was much softened by the absence of the chaplain, Ananias, and, in any case, with one scene almost entirely devoted to praising the king's majesty, it would have been a brave man who would openly complain about the piece. To have done so would have implied disloyalty to the king himself, and laid the complainant open to a charge of treason. Moreover, there were no clauses restraining political lines that could be delivered from the stage of a licensed theatre. Thus, Coffey and Mottley appear to have shared Gay's good fortune and carried the day, with their finale sending their audiences home, their ears warmed by the strains of Hey Boys up go wee, a tune that had served pamphleteers since the days of Charles I, as first one side and then another

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1. Gay, The Beggar's Opera (London, 1729 (New York, 1973)), Act i, Scene iii, p.5.

celebrated the advantage they held over their rivals.<sup>1</sup>

Examination of the manner in which Coffey and Mottley made use of existing songs and their tunes is most informative. It is clear that both authors selected songs both for the appeal of a particular tune, or for the sake of its subject; and where the ballad tune had been used in one of their earlier pieces, it is interesting to note that they employed them to illustrate an associated dramatic situation. This was quite different from the ballad-operas written later in the century, when writers and musicians collaborated to produce original ballads, like those which Thomas Arne set to music for Thomas and Sally in 1760.

Clearly, in the case of The Devil to Pay the songs were written to tunes already associated with the subject they were intended to underline, be it correcting a fault, or divorcing a wife, or commenting on the deceits of life. The sense and wit of such songs depended substantially on the aptness of the parody. The music, however, also served a function of another kind, adding extra definition to the characters. For example Nell, confirmed in her role as a Virtue-character, comments freely on feminine subterfuges, while Jobson's songs add much to his corrective role in the comedy, Sir John's songs mostly serve to underline his inadequacy until the sentimental interest arises later in the play, and until the finale when he is restored to his former position of authority.

#### P. Coffey's sequel: The Merry Cobler

The success of The Devil to Pay was so great that after the lapse of a few years Coffey attempted to capitalise on his success by means of a second afterpiece based on the same characters. In this piece Coffey continued the adventures of Jobson and Nell but, in the new afterpiece,

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1. A Collection of English Songs (c.114.1.4. (59)). See The Discovery or The Squire turn'd Ferret. This was written in 1727 to ridicule the Queen's personal physician, a Sinecure in the gift of the Whigs.

Coffey so arranged matters that Jobson received the benefit of the corrective elements in the comedy.

The curtain rises to reveal the interior of the cobbler's cottage where Jobson, having spent the money given to him by Sir John, resolves to sell the clothes presented to Nell by Lady Loverule in order to give a party for his friends. Nell puts a brave face on matters, keeping the fact that they are near to starvation from her friends.

Sir John, now with designs on Nell's virtue, disguises himself as the magician and bribes the starving apprentice, Tony, to let him into the house, where he tells Nell's fortune. Having thus prepared his ground, he meets her in his own clothes to declare his love for her. The piece ends amid scenes of hilarity as Sir John, disguised as the magician, is discovered hiding under the table in the cottage by Jobson and his friends and thrown into the horsepond.

In spite of sharing many obvious similarities with its forerunner, regarding the use of music and its scenes of farce, The Merry Cobbler was booed off the stage at its first appearance on the 6th May 1735 at Drury Lane.<sup>1</sup> Though there is little recorded in the way of comment, it would seem that Coffey's afterpiece, containing little or no literary merit, lacked novelty and its scenes of farce were not sufficiently well executed to please an audience by now well accustomed to these entertainments.<sup>2</sup>

#### Q. Topical Elements in the Ballad-Operas

Political life has always provided comedians with a rich store of jokes, but in London during the 1730s the theatre climate deteriorated as Walpole sought Parliamentary support in suppressing the freedom of the Stage. As a consequence, Jobson's songs took on a new and deeper

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1. Scouten, The London Stage (Carbondale, Illinois, 1961), pt iii, p. 488.

2. See the entry under "Coffey, Charles", which appears in W.R. Chetwood's The British Theatre (Dublin, 1750).

meaning. Their associations with 'great men in the grip of ambition' within the discreet code of communication then in use could only refer to the leadership. Thus the choice of songs that lie beneath the ditties sung by Jobson in the ballad-opera not only confirmed him in his role as 'mender' of souls, but also as the mender of one soul in particular.

Seen in this light, the ballad-operas served as witty (even scandalous) entertainments, commenting on the day-to-day political life of the times. As such, they attracted large audiences, including a number of foreign visitors, drawn to visit the newly rebuilt English capital following the Great Fire of 1666.

In these circumstances, Coffey's piece gained a reputation on the Continent. Adapted in France in the form of a full-length three-act entertainment, Le diable à quatre (1756) was also acclaimed in Portugal, while in Vienna the French version gave rise to another variant of the piece: Die doppelte Verwandlung, performed in 1767.<sup>1</sup>

It was in Germany, however, that Coffey's afterpiece made the biggest impact on Continental audiences. Translated in 1743, Der Teufel ist los was performed with its English tunes until a revised one-act version appeared in 1752. This was performed in Leipzig with entirely new music and it was an immediate and long-lasting success. Subsequently it was expanded into a full-length, three-act entertainment including some additions from the French version. The resulting hybrid provided the model upon which the modern German Singspiel was founded.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Die doppelte Verwandlung, eine freye Nachahmung von der bekannten und beliebten komische Oper, Le diable à quatre (Wien, 1767).

2. Georgy Calmus lists most of the variants in the following sequence in his study of early German Singspiel:

Der Teufel ist los (Berlin, 1743), v. Borcke.

Der Teufel ist los (Leipzig, 1752), Weisse.

Le diable à quatre (Paris, 1756), Sedaine.

Der Teufel ist los (Leipzig, 1766), Weisse.

Il diavolo à quattro (Lisbon, 1797).

The complete list appears in Die ersten deutschen Singspiele von Standfuss und Hiller (Leipzig, 1908 (Wiesbaden, 1973)), 6 Bde. See "Der Teufel ist los oder die verwandelten Weiber", p. 3.

These improvements in the quality of German theatre life sprang from the personal interest of the Prussian Ambassador to London at that time, Caspar Wilhelm von Borcke, whose liking for this particular ballad-opera led him to translate the piece for the German stage.



## CHAPTER TWO

### CONTRIBUTARY ELEMENTS IN THE EARLY SINGSPIELE

#### A. The state of German theatre 1743-52

Caspar Wilhelm von Borcke (1704-1747) chose a career in the Prussian diplomatic service. His duties required him to undertake a considerable amount of travelling and he served his country's embassy in Copenhagen, Dresden, Brunswick, London and Vienna. A career in the king's service did not detract from his interests in literary affairs; on the contrary, it brought him into contact with a broader spectrum of theatre life than he could have found in his native Berlin.<sup>1</sup>

It was during his period of service in London (1735-38) that he came to know the English stage. How close this contact was may be gauged from the business he conducted on behalf of Seedo, the composer and house-musician at the theatre in Drury Lane. Von Borcke made it his business to obtain a post for Seedo with the court orchestra at Potsdam: a post which the musician apparently accepted for he left England in 1736.<sup>2</sup> During his stay in London, von Borcke also obtained a number of play-books, which he took back to Germany when he returned there in 1738. Subsequently, while recuperating from an illness he occupied himself by undertaking a translation of Shakespeare's Julius Caesar. But his long-standing interest in letters won more public recognition when he was invited to become one of the curators of the Berlin Academy.<sup>3</sup> There he found German plays for the most part neglected, indeed, almost defunct, with no new plays being written.

Indigenous German drama had suffered such a reversal during the long Thirty Years' War that it had virtually ceased to exist. This lack was

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1. Neue deutsche Biographie (Berlin, 1952-), "Borcke, Caspar Wilhelm von".

2. Groves, New Dictionary of Music (London, 1980), "Seedo".

3. J.C. Gottsched (ed. T.W. Danzel) Gottsched und seine Zeit; Auszüge aus seinem Briefwechsel (Leipzig, 1848), p. 148.



and Italian opera seria, and equally familiar with the comedies of the commedia d'el arte, knew little or nothing about their own literary tradition. It was in these circumstances that two small groups of intellectuals, based in Leipzig and Zurich, sought to remedy this lamentable state of affairs.

The movement to re-establish German Letters was led by Johann Christoph Gottsched, Professor of Poetry at the University of Leipzig; and, since at that time the art of poetry still included literary drama, Gottsched set himself the herculean task of reforming the German stage.<sup>1</sup> His most important work, however, appeared in 1730, Versuch einer kritischen Dichtkunst vor die Deutschen sets out the principles of the art of writing modern poetry according to his own theories of good taste and sense. Gottsched returned to the principles of classical poetry, in which verse forms were composed according to the rules governing each genre. At the same time, he sought to give expression to realism in keeping with man's experience of Nature.

Over the next few years, Gottsched became an eminent man of Letters in the German states, producing journals on literary affairs, treatises on the language of the theatre, even taking the trouble to point out the paradox of actors appearing on stage in classical plays wearing modern dress.<sup>2</sup> This incessant search for ways to introduce realism into the theatres led him to insist on the most meticulous observation of detail. For example, he demanded that plays should be written in language that best reflected the subject of the play. This tradition had been lost in Germany. As a result, he turned to French literature for plays that provided models of the formal perfections epitomised in the dramas of classical Greece.

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1. J.G. Robertson (ed. D. Reich) A History of German Literature (London, 1970), Sixth Edition, p.233 ff. In effect, Gottsched sought to combine sensibility and realism with the rules of French poetry, and he rejected all forms of fantasy.

2. J.C. Gottsched, Redekunst nach Anleitung der Griechen und Römer (Leipzig, 1743).

The movement to re-establish German literature was by no means confined to Leipzig, and towards the end of the 1730s Johann Jakob Bodmer and Johann Breitinger, both professors at the University in Zurich, began to publish their ideas. Their aims were similar to those of Gottsched, but they took a very different point of view of the means of reforming German literature. In 1732 Bodmer published a prose translation of Milton's Paradise Lost, his Critische Abhandlung von dem Wunderbaren in der Poesie followed in 1740.<sup>1</sup> It was only then that the extent of the differences between the Swiss and Gottsched were fully revealed. They failed to agree over the fundamental question of poetry as an experience. The Swiss, far from wishing to impose regular form and rules upon the writing of verse, sought to free poetry, the better to inspire the most vivid imagery, much as the English poet Milton had already achieved in his biblical epic. Bodmer demonstrated that the best examples of writing sprang not from the inflexible imposition of rules, but rather from rules growing out of the example of good writing. Breitinger's Critische Dichtkunst appeared during 1740, and went even further in support of Bodmer's ideas. For the moment, Gottsched still held the centre of the stage, because of the success of his literary journal Beitrage zur critischen Historie der deutschen Sprache Poesie und Beredsamkeit (1732-44).<sup>2</sup> Moreover, by this time, he had been successful in recruiting the best possible support for his reform of the German stage: the theatre managers, Neuber and Schönnemann.

The first of these founded a company destined to rank as one of the most celebrated of the century. This was Johann Neuber's company which, apart from playing in Leipzig, held a number of licences to play in other cities, notably Hamburg. Sympathetic to Gottsched's aims and, no

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1. Robertson, History of German Literature (London, 1970), p. 223 ff.

2. Ibid.

doubt, aware of his influence in Leipzig, the company staged a number of plays prepared by Gottsched, enjoying a particular success with his Der Sterbende Cato in 1731: a piece performed widely during the course of their tour.<sup>1</sup> More successes followed, with Gottsched's translation of Racine's tragedy Berenice. Early correspondence between Neuber and Gottsched already gave expression to disagreement; but their friendship began to cool over Gottsched's continued interference in the theatre - even over matters which he did not fully understand.<sup>2</sup>

Finally, in 1740 Frau Neuber was invited to the Russian court, but the death of the Tsarine, Anna, the following spring dashed her hopes and she returned home to take up her licence in Leipzig once more, only to find a remarkable change in their company's fortunes.<sup>3</sup>

During her absence, Frederick Schönmann had set up a rival company in Lüneberg and with Gottsched's support he had applied for a licence to erect a new theatre in Berlin. Schönmann's licence was granted by King

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1. H. Blümner, Geschichte des Theaters in Leipzig (Leipzig, 1818), pp. 49-50.

2. Danzel (ed.), Gottsched und seine Zeit (Leipzig, 1848), p. 131. Neuber to Gottsched, June 1730:

Berenice sounds better now than in Leipzig; here several distinguished people who claim an understanding of these things, have offered these reflections: one should break up the long speeches here and there and allow other characters to speak in order that audiences enjoy a little variety. Similarly, a Swedish cavalier, who also seemed well informed over these matters, suggested that in future, we should translate French first into German, and then experiment to find out whether a word that sounds tender in French sounds equally tender in German, and if it does not flow word by word, should we not find pleasure in the spirit, rather than in the literal translation of the words, then everything will turn out splendidly. The verses please, but one laments a certain unfamiliar veiled obscurity which causes concern that the audience is unable to understand everything immediately that has been spoken. One must have patience with the times. Iphigenia has not yet been performed, but will be given soon. Best regards from us all, the clock strikes, and I must stop writing to get to the theatre, & etc.

3. Allgemeine deutsche Biographie, "Neuber, Fredericke".

Frederick on the 7th July 1741, and his company opened the following September with a new production of Gottsched's Der sterbende Cato, with the pastorate Die gelernte Liebe as an afterpiece. This production ran for thirteen nights and brought in much needed receipts.<sup>1</sup> His company continued to stage the run of Gottsched's plays with some success, but Schönnemann was already well aware that the Berlin public, long used to hearing Italian singers of the first rank, demanded more in the way of entertainment than Gottsched's plays could offer. As a consequence, he sought something with a more novel appeal than the intermezzos then so common.

Schönnemann was fortunate in this respect, and managed to acquire Caspar von Borcke's translation of Charles Coffey's The Devil to Pay. This piece, set during the Christmas season with its wild party scene but, above all, its compliment to the king's majesty, must have seemed a most suitable piece to stage in celebration of King Frederick's birthday which, also by coincidence, fell during the Christmas season. Thus, Charles Coffey's afterpiece received its première in the German states under its new German title, Der Teufel ist los, oder die verwandelten Weiber, on the 24th January 1743 in the Prussian capital, Berlin.<sup>2</sup>

There were several facets of Der Teufel that Schönnemann could expect to be well received. Apart from the compliment to the king's majesty, the stereotype of the nagging wife, exemplified in the character of Nell, had long been a popular feature of the Italian interludes. Apart from this, the role of Jobson shared the universal appeal of the buffoon, already known to German audiences by means of the popular stock characters Pickelherring or Hanswurst. Even the role of Sir John Loverule - the suffering husband - was well represented among the stock characters

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1. H. Devrient, Die Schönnemannsche Truppe in Berlin, Breslau, Danzig und Königsburg (1742-44) (Hamburg, 1894), p. 7.

2. Ibid., p. 13.

of the Commedia dell'arte.<sup>1</sup>

However, Schönemann must have gone to considerable trouble over this production, even going so far as to obtain the services of the musician Seedo, who at that time held a post in Potsdam.<sup>2</sup> Such a drain on the company's meagre financial reserves represented a considerable risk, and underlines the desperate straits to which Schönemann was reduced in his search for patronage.

In the event, King Frederick continued to prefer opera buffa, and his loyalty to the Italian players remained undiminished; but even though this lack of royal interest brought Schönemann's company low, by dint of economy and hard work it survived. Moreover, the success of Der Teufel may have played some part in the company's continued existence, for it was certainly repeated in Berlin and Hamburg.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, the piece was sufficiently successful to merit precautions being taken to safeguard such a valuable property. Consequently Schönemann retained the piece in its manuscript form, never allowing it to be published.<sup>4</sup> When it was performed in Leipzig, the piece aroused so much interest there that it marked the beginning of a new epoch on the German stage. Christian Felix Weisse undertook to prepare a new translation of the piece for the Koch company, then just establishing themselves in the city.

#### B. Christian Felix Weisse: biography

Christian Felix Weisse was born in 1726 in Annaberg, where his father was Rector of the local Grammar school.<sup>5</sup> Six months later his father took up a new post as Direktor of the Grammar school in Altenberg, where

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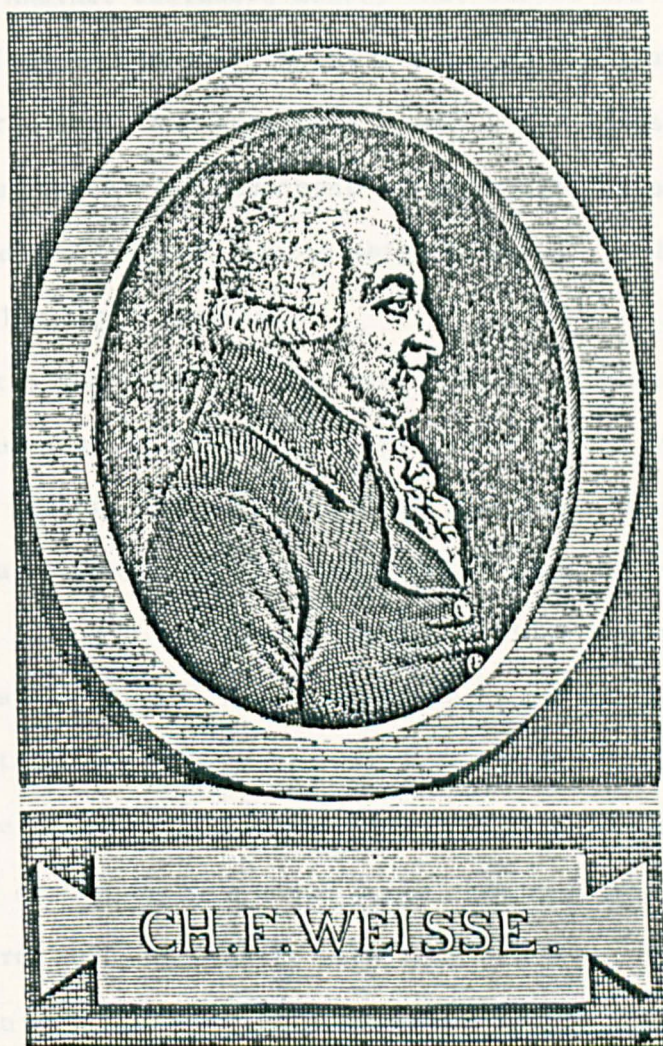
1. Minor, Ch. F. Weisse (Innsbruck, 1880), pp. 92, 134. See also H.M. Schletterer, Das deutsche Singspiel von seinem ersten Anfangen bis auf die neueste Zeite (Augsburg, 1863 (New York, 1975)), pp. 41-2.

2. The New Grove Dictionary of Music (London 1980), "Seedo".

3. H. Devrient, Die Schönemannsche Truppe (Hamburg, 1894), pp. 15-16.

4. Ch. F. Weisse, Selbstbiographie (Leipzig, 1806), p. 25.

5. Ibid., pp. 1-3.



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Deutsche National-Litteratur, historische kritische Ausgabe(Berlin und  
Stuttgart, 1882-9), 164Bde. See Bd. 72, p vii.



he fostered an interest in his pupils in the world beyond the normal classical curriculum, and Christian Felix long treasured his early memories of seeing biblical comedies put on in his father's school. In 1730 his father died at the early age of forty-two, leaving his widow and three children. Another childhood memory that shaped his future came from the expeditions to Chemnitz in the company of his grandfather, mother and sister, where they were able to enjoy the pleasures of the busy market place; especially prominent were the attractions of the theatre booths and the farcical pieces which featured the Doctor and Hanswurst made a lasting impression.<sup>1</sup>

When he was ten years old, he was sent away to Grammar school, where he received a good general education in Mathematics, Natural Science, Natural History, History and Geography. He long remembered the hours of rote learning that accompanied his study of Latin and Greek. Yet, in spite of this he formed a liking for poetry, besides which his liking for comedy opened his mind to the beauties of the Greek and Roman poets and his early attempts at construing classical verse, but he remembered from the hours of rote learning that the rules of grammar seemed to be valued above the genius of the authors whose works they studied.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, Weisse worked hard, and his efforts were rewarded when, in 1745, he obtained a place in Leipzig University to read classics.

In Leipzig he formed new impressions and the direction of his studies was strongly influenced by the friends he made there. Among these was the historian Johann Heinrich Schlegel. Through his good offices, Weisse formed a life-long association with Gotthold Ephraim Lessing. Also, he found himself on the fringe of the influential circle of contributors to

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1. Hanswurst was the Germanised form of the character Pickelherring taken over from the English players during the 16th century. The Doctor was one of the Commedia dell'arte characters.

2. Ch. F. Weisse, Selbstbiographie (Leipzig, 1806), pp. 5-6.

the literary magazine, the Bremer Beyträge.<sup>1</sup> In this way, Weisse came to know such writers as Klopstock, Cramer, Gärtner, Johann Adolph Schlegel, Giseke, Cellert, Rabener, Kästner and Mylius. This was a glittering circle which Weisse admired from a distance, but it was his friendship with Lessing that he most prized and which proved most influential. The two men shared an enthusiasm for the best and the newest literature; through the influence of Lessing Weisse learned English and they spent hours criticising what they heard and read, learning to consider both sides of a question, and correcting their standpoint accordingly.<sup>2</sup> During this time Weisse and Lessing found their chief recreation in the theatre. In particular in Frau Neuber's theatre, often, in Weisse's own words, "preferring dry bread - for Lessing too did not have much to spare, before letting a single visit to the theatre elude them".<sup>3</sup>

Their policy of obtaining tickets regardless of cost brought such personal sufferings that they urgently sought other means of obtaining admission. Once they found that Frau Neuber needed new pieces for the stage, they earned free tickets translating a variety of French pieces for the company. By and by they prepared pieces of their own: Lessing's Der junge Gelehrten and Weisse's Die Matrone von Ephesus nach dem Petron were both written during this time, and performed with some success. Their close friendship ceased with Lessing's sudden departure from Leipzig. Shortly afterwards Weisse witnessed the collapse of Frau Neuber's company. By now his studies were completed and in 1750 he left university and took up a post in Graf von Geyerberg's household.

As von Geyersberg's Hofmeister, Weisse maintained his connections with the University. He resumed his interest in the theatre, and he was able to renew his friendship with the actor, Eckhof, whose manifold

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1. Ibid., pp. 11-12.

2. Ibid., p. 13.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., pp. 21-2.

abilities made him one of Leipzig's sought-after personalities. Also, Weisse met the novelist Gellert, a man of great service to the German language and its poetry, and one of the last remaining contributors of the Bremer Beyträge.<sup>1</sup>

During these years, when Lessing and Weisse were students in Leipzig, it was impossible to conduct any business with the city's leading theatre company, or to consort with the literary circles of such standing as the Bremer Beyträge enjoyed, without also offending one of the literary factions: the Swiss, led by Bodmer, or the Leipzig faction, led by Professor Gottsched, a man of considerable influence destined to feature prominently in Weisse's literary career. The long-running conflict between Gottsched and Frau Neuber finally brought her company to ruin, leaving Weisse in no doubt as to what his own position should be.

He attended Gottsched's Society but once (as a member) and then only to deliver a eulogy marking the death of the Graf von Manteufel.<sup>2</sup> Apart from this, Weisse chose not to associate with Gottsched's circle, and avoided any connection between himself and Gottsched's supporters. Instead, Weisse continued to uphold the theatre company which had nurtured him during his formative years as a student and writer for the stage. Moreover, this was the same company which Weisse had seen ruined by Gottsched and his supporters, and which had since then been taken over by Heinrich Koch.

It was during these early days of Koch's management, when the company had no theatre and were struggling to mount their first production, that Schönemann's rival company arrived for the Easter Fair of 1750. Koch, who now held the licence to perform in Leipzig, allowed Schönemann to use one of the theatres. This was to be Schönemann's final visit to the city. Interestingly enough, one of the pieces chosen as part of

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1. Ibid., p. 22.

2. Ibid., p. 19.

their final programme was the afterpiece, Der Teufel ist los. Meanwhile, Koch launched his new company as best he could, playing in a makeshift, open-air theatre in the Enoch Richter's Garten.<sup>1</sup>

During this time Weisse continued to work on behalf of the company, writing a number of short preludes, and so much did Koch value this support that he offered Weisse a position as house-playwright, an honour which he gratefully accepted, and in 1751 the company performed his first full-length play. This was Die Poeten nach der Mode.<sup>2</sup>

Weisse had conceived the idea of depicting the literary dispute between Gottsched and the Swiss in the form of a comedy. This enabled him to pour equal scorn on both parties.

The play was an instant success, not only in Leipzig but also in Hamburg and Berlin.<sup>3</sup> The treatment of the characters, especially that of Henriette was considered a little stiff. Nevertheless, the play so caught the spirit of the times that these deficiencies were insufficient to mar its appeal. Moreover, by this means, Weisse demonstrated his impartiality through the character of Palmer, and picked his way carefully between both parties. But his parodies on Gottsched's style did not go unnoticed and it was not long before Gottsched found a means of taking his revenge.<sup>4</sup>

Koch had continued to perform the usual Italian interludes with considerable success. Yet these interludes drew continual criticism from his opponents, led by Gottsched, who saw in the interludes not an entertainment but a general collapse in standards of theatrical taste. Besides this issue, these pieces were criticised for their triviality and their

1. Blümner, Geschichte des Theaters in Leipzig (Leipzig, 1818), p. 8.

2. Weisse, Lustspiele (Leipzig, 1783), 4 Bde. See i, pp. 1-110, "Die Poeten nach der Mode".

3. Minor, Ch. F. Weisse (Innsbruck, 1884), pp. 90-1. The play was performed in Hamburg in 1756, in Berlin in 1771, and it remained popular long after Gottsched's death in 1766.

4. Ibid., p. 134.

bawdiness. Yet public demand for these 'trivial' entertainments was confirmed in receipts at the box office and Koch, remembering the success that Schönnemann had enjoyed with Der Teufel, decided to acquire this piece too. But, since neither von Borcke nor Schönnemann had found it necessary to publish the manuscript, there was no simple method of obtaining the complete work. Therefore Koch offered Weisse the commission to prepare an entirely new translation from the English original. Weisse accepted, and set to work. But since the music was not available and, in any case, he found it inconvenient to write verse to existing melodies, Weisse's free translations of the verses were set to music by Koch's house-musician, Johann Christoph Standfuss.<sup>1</sup> The resulting afterpiece received its première in Leipzig on the 6th October 1752. It was an immediate success with the public, but offended the Gottsched party. Koch, well pleased with the success of the venture, retained his property in its manuscript form, which has not survived.

Upon the outbreak of the Seven Years' War in 1756, Koch disbanded his company. The following year Schönnemann retired from theatre activities and the members of his company invited Koch to lead them. Koch joined the company in time for Easter in 1758.<sup>2</sup> One of his first acts was to ask Weisse to prepare a translation of the sequel to Coffey's afterpiece The Devil to Pay. This was The Merry Cobler.<sup>3</sup> Set to music by Standfuss, it was performed with success on the 18th January 1759 in Lübeck.<sup>4</sup>

Meanwhile, Weisse continued to combine a literary career with his duties as Hofmeister to the Graf von Geyersberg. In November 1759 Weisse was required to accompany his employer on a visit to Paris. There Weisse came into contact with the work of French playwrights. He was most impressed by the opéras comiques, and on his return to Leipzig in 1760

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1. Weisse, Selbstbiographie (Leipzig, 1806), pp. 25-6.

2. Blümner, Geschichte des Theaters (Leipzig, 1818), p. 117.

3. Coffey, The Merry Cobler, or the second part of The Devil to Pay: a farcical Opera in one Act (London, 1735).

4. Weisse, Selbstbiographie (Leipzig, 1806), p. 41.

he resolved to prepare some of these pieces for the German stage at the earliest opportunity.<sup>1</sup> During this time, Weisse was preparing his Beyträge zum deutschen Theater. But his employer decided to take a man into his service as Hofmeister more to his liking, and Weisse was obliged to take up a new employment as a Tax Inspector in Dresden in 1761.<sup>2</sup>

With the end of the Seven Years' War in 1763 Koch returned to Leipzig and opened for a short Michaelmas season before going on to Dresden in response to an invitation from the Elector. During this time Koch gave Weisse the commission to revise Der Teufel and expand the after-piece into a full-length entertainment. This new version of the piece, incorporating many French improvements, was performed with great success on the 6th October 1766.<sup>3</sup> This success led to several more commissions and for these Weisse adapted some of the French opéras comiques he had seen during his stay in Paris. The first of these, an adaptation of Favart's Ninette à la cour, was staged under the title Lottchen am Hofe on the 14th April 1767. As a result of this continued success, Koch commissioned Weisse to prepare several more Singspiele. Consequently, Weisse adapted Goldoni's comedy Der Krieg which received its première on the 14th January 1768, and then combined the two short French pieces Annette et Lubin, by Favart, and La Clochette by Anseaume. These were staged as a single full-length Singspiel on the 18th May 1768 under the title Die Liebe auf dem Lande. During the same year Weisse turned his attention to the work of Charles Coffey once more. He expanded his earlier translation of Coffey's afterpiece The Merry Cobbler into a full-length, three-act Singspiel for the Schuh'sche company in Berlin, where it received its first performance under its German title: Der lustige Schuster oder der zweyte Theil vom Teufel ist los.

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1. Ibid., pp. 62-8.

2. Ibid., pp. 102-3.

3. Ibid.

Between 1768 and 1770 Koch ran into financial difficulties. He was rescued from his plight by an invitation to take his company to the Court of the Herzogin von Weimar, Anna Amelia, where he staged Weisse's most successful Singspiel, Die Jagd, at the command of the Herzogin on the 29th January 1770. This piece was adapted from Collé's La partie de chasse (1766).<sup>1</sup> It was followed by Der Dorfbalhbier performed in Leipzig on the 18th April 1771: a three-act adaptation of Sedaine's Blaise le Savetier.<sup>2</sup>

With his fortunes restored, Koch took his company to Berlin, where they opened on the 10th July 1771. The company soon won the approval of their new audience and Koch responded by commissioning a new musical piece. Instead of adapting another opéra comique, Weisse wrote an original piece, Die Aerntekranz, first performed on the 17th February 1772. Its success led to an improved version of Der Krieg being staged later in the year on the 17th August 1772, and to Die Jubelhochzeit, the second of Weisse's original Singspiele, which received its première in Berlin on the 5th April 1773.<sup>3</sup>

Following Koch's death in Berlin on the 3rd January 1775, Weisse turned his attention to other literary projects, among them a Singspiel written specifically for children; Die Aehrenleserin.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to his Singspiele, Weisse had published earlier in his career a volume of poems which, though not of the highest rank, did much to establish him in his writing career. This was his anthology, Scherzhaften Lieder, published in Leipzig in 1756.<sup>5</sup> Weisse also became a well-known dramatist and his plays appeared in a number of different editions.

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1. Charles Collé, La partie de chasse de Henri IV, Comedie en trois actes & en prose (Paris, 1766).

2. Kyoko Kawada, Studien zu den Singspielen von Johann Adam Hiller (1728-1804) (Marburg/Lahn, 1969), Phil. Diss., pp. 31-8. See also Weisse, Komische Opern (Leipzig, 1777), 3 Bde. The date of this performance is unknown.

3. Kawada, Johann Adam Hiller (Marburg/Lahn), 1969), pp. 37-8.

4. Minor, Ch. F. Weisse (Innsbruck, 1880), p. 53.

5. Allgemeiner deutsche Biographie. See the article under "Weisse, Christoph Felix".

His best known tragedy was, perhaps, Richard III, while his most widely performed comedy was Die Poeten nach der Mode. He died in Leipzig in his seventy-ninth year on the 16th December 1804.

C. Der Teufel ist los: Weisse's one-act translation (1752)

This text was retained in manuscript form and it is now lost.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, the text appears to have formed the basis of Weisse's three-act version of the play, published in 1768; for in this full-length version a substantial portion of Coffey's original dialogue together with a number of his songs can be readily identified in the text.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, when Johann Adam Hiller published his keyboard edition of the music to the expanded version of Der Teufel, he identified the twelve songs retained from the earlier one-act version of 1752.<sup>3</sup> In the light of these circumstances, it is possible to form a reliable impression of the one-act version performed in 1752.

Taken together, Weisse's text to the later full-length version of Der Teufel and Hiller's keyboard edition of the music indicate that he wrote a straightforward translation of the original English text, with little or no attempt to develop the plot or the characterisation, for the one-act version performed in 1752. This would be entirely consistent with the need to keep the running time under control. Also, von Borcke's version had been very popular, and having been performed with success only two years earlier it was necessary for Weisse to remain faithful to the original. Indeed, the only novelty appears to have been supplied by the music. Thus, with the evidence contained in Weisse's

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1. Weisse, Selbstbiographie (Leipzig, 1806), p. 25.

2. Weisse, Die verwandelten Weibe, oder der Teufel ist los (Leipzig, 1768). Caspar von Borcke's translation, Weisse's one-act version of 1752, and his expanded version of the same piece were all acted under the same title.

3. J.A. Hiller, Die verwandelten Weiber, oder der Teufel ist los, erster Theil. Eine comische Oper in drey Aufzügen (Leipzig, 1770).



text and the songs which survive by Standfuss, it is possible to gain some impression of the piece.

Since 1743, the date of its German première, Der Teufel had kept the stage. No doubt because of this, Weisse retained the same title and the original list of characters almost intact.<sup>1</sup> These were:<sup>2</sup>

Sir John Loverule	Herr von Liebreich
Butler	Kellner
Cook	Koch
Footman	Bedienter
Coachman	Kutcher
Jobson	Jobsen
Lady Loverule	Frau von Liebreich
Lucy )	Hannchen)
Lettice) maids	Lieschen) maids
Nell, Jobson's wife	Lene
Blind Fiddler & chorus	

Altogether, Weisse retained eighty-one per cent of Coffey's original dialogue in the expanded three-act version performed in 1766.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the dialogue remains in its proper sequence. Since the piece was expanded to accommodate several new episodes, it seems most reasonable to suppose that Weisse felt himself obliged to retain the bulk of the original material. Thus, in Coffey's English version of 1731, Nell's opening speech reveals Jobson's weakness for the company of his friends which gives rise to her plea:<sup>4</sup>

Nell: Pr'y'thee, good Jobson, stay with me To-night,  
and, for once, make merry at home.

While Lene, Nell's German counterpart, opens the play using almost the same words:<sup>5</sup>

Lene: Ich bitte dich, liebster Jobsen, bleib immer  
diesen Abend bey mir, und mache dich einmal  
zu Hause lustig.

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1. Weisse, Die verwandelten Weiber, oder der Teufel ist los (Leipzig, 1768). The 1732 version ran under the same title.

2. Ibid.

3. Out of two hundred and seventy-nine speeches, Weisse retained a total of two hundred and twenty-seven, i.e. 81.362%.

4. Coffey, The Devil to Pay (London, 1731), p. 1.

5. Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), p. 3.

While the dialogue appears to have been a literal translation of the English original, the songs presented Weisse with a greater problem. He was reluctant to attempt a translation of the songs to the rhythms imposed by the existing tunes that had been employed by Schönnemann. Instead, Weisse undertook a free translation of Coffey's songs and added several more of his own. Thus, although the plot of Weisse's one-act version of Der Teufel was identical with its English counterpart, as a result of Weisse's treatment of the songs the general style of the piece underwent considerable change, especially when the songs were set to new music. Koch placed this task in the hands of his own house-musician, Johann Christoph Standfuss.

#### D. Standfuss's music to Der Teufel

With the story-line sustained so faithfully (even within the later expanded version), Weisse's claim that this piece appeared in 1752 in a much altered form - "in einer sehr veränderten Gestalt" - was almost certainly a reference to Standfuss's music.<sup>1</sup>

Almost nothing is known of the life of Standfuss beyond the fact of his employment as Koch's house-musician (Ballettgeiger).<sup>2</sup> In this capacity he supplied the music for Weisse's translation of Coffey's two afterpieces, The Devil to Pay and The Merry Cocker. He also wrote at least one operetta on his own account in imitation of Der Teufel ist los. This was the piece given under the title Der stolze Bauer Jochem Tröbs.<sup>3</sup> Writing some time later, Gerber reported his death in a hospital in Hamburg in 1756; but since he composed the music for Der lustige Schuster in 1759, it is clear that Gerber's date is wrong.

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1. Weisse, Selbstbiographie (Leipzig, 1806), pp. 25-6.

2. E.L. Gerber, Historisch-Biographisches Lexicon der Tonkünstler welches Nachrichten von dem Leben und Werken Musikalischer Schriftsteller, berühmter Componisten Sänger, Meister auf Instrumenten, Dilletanten, Orgel und Instrumenten Macher, enthält (Leipzig, 1790), 2 Bde. See ii, p. 559.

3. Minor, Ch. F. Weisse (Innsbruck, 1880), p. 138 N.

He seems to have joined Koch's company during its early days, in 1750. Among his duties, rehearsing actors and musicians for the Italian interludes, he found himself confronted with the task of setting suitable new music to Weiss's freely translated verses. Standfuss's talent for expressing the coarse humour of the Italian interludes in terms of music is amply demonstrated in the few pieces of his music which have survived in Der Teufel ist los, published in Hiller's piano edition of 1770.<sup>1</sup>

Weisse's free translations of Coffey's songs gave Standfuss opportunity to create an entirely fresh score for Koch's production. In the absence of any German tradition of theatre music Standfuss turned to the buffa style. This allowed him to combine the advantage of writing music in a popular style with the need to underpin the antics of the actors on stage.

Unfortunately neither his overture nor his music for the finale survived: however, enough of his music has survived to give an impression of the general style of his songs. Standfuss's contribution to Weisse's afterpiece is of considerable help in re-establishing standards of contemporary taste in theatre music, for this was intended to be a popular entertainment. Its success consolidated Koch's finances and enabled him to move into better premises.<sup>2</sup>

Most of the songs which survive reveal Standfuss's marked preference for the arietta: this compact style, which excluded the tiresome and needless repetitions to be found in the arias of the time, also brought a dramatic advantage. In the aria, the da capo returns the listener notionally to a point in the action preceding the central section of the song form, as the words of the 'A' section are repeated. The arietta

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1. Some pieces also survive in Hiller's, Der lustige Schuster (Leipzig, 1770).

2. See below, p. 84. Also, Weisse, Selbstbiographie (Leipzig, 1806), p. 25, "und werde ein einträgliches Stück für die Casse".

however, lacking this encumbrance carries the action forward.<sup>1</sup> Standfuss also included a number of strophic songs. Therefore, his overall design resulted in a scheme combining elements drawn from both English and Italian music, marking a departure from the more unified style of the Italian interludes. Thus, out of Standfuss's remaining twelve songs, seven were composed in the style of ariettas. *Apart from these*, he included four strophic songs and one da capo aria (included to meet a particular dramatic need). There was also one piece of incidental music: a march to accompany the servants' procession when they carried in the punch bowl.<sup>2</sup>

The ariettas were written to accommodate the relatively untrained voices of Koch's actors. Nevertheless, Standfuss was well aware of the considerable experience the company had amassed in presenting the Italian interludes.<sup>3</sup> The musical skills required by some of these pieces were quite considerable, and provided the everyday attractions demanded by the public. Thus Standfuss was able to call upon the actor playing the role of Jobsen not only to sing in the style demanded by opera buffa, but even short passages of recitative. This indicates that Koch's actors were already skilled in accommodating changes of pace in music to add comic effect to the action. Indeed, Jobsen's first number sets the mood for much of the ensuing comedy. This was Weisse's translation of Coffey's old song He that has the best Wife (Das allerbeste Weib).

This song expresses Jobsen's exasperation with the ways of women.

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1. Hiller states quite clearly that the provincial theatres clung to the airs written by Standfuss even after the success of his own music in the 1766 version, but he replaced Standfuss's overture because it had never pleased him. Hiller, Die verwandelten Weiber (Leipzig, 1770), Vorbericht. The form of the arietta (viz. cavatina) is discussed by Calmus, Studien zu den Singspielen von Johann Adam Hiller (Leipzig, 1908), and by Kyoko Kawade, Johann Adam Hiller (Marburg/Lahn, 1969). Phil. Diss., pp. 124-200. In Germany, the term arietta is in universal use. As such it seems the most acceptable technical term for this particular song form.

2. Hiller, Die verwandelten Weiber (Leipzig, 1770), Vorbericht. Hiller initialled Standfuss's pieces with the letters Stfs.

3. Weisse, Selbstbiographie (Leipzig, 1806), p. 26. It is clear that a number of musicians were employed in the company.

Thus, the first two lines are set in a brisk 2/4 Allegro:<sup>1</sup>



The third line, however - doch quält sie ihn mit Zank und Schreyen (yet she torments one with bickering and screeching) is set in a slower 3/4 time:<sup>2</sup>



The remaining three lines of Weisse's stanza forms the 'B' section of the arietta which, reverting to the opening allegro tempo, ends amid a crescendo which grows out of the repetition of terse melodic fragments in typical buffa style.

At first glance there appears little or nothing to connect Standfuss's music with that of its counterpart, the English ballad-opera version adapted by von Borcke. Yet close examination reveals an interesting similarity with the earlier English afterpiece.

When Coffey's The Devil to Pay was adapted as an afterpiece, Theophilous Cibber had procured the services of the Prussian musician Seedo who, instead of following the usual English practice of adapting an existing tune for Lord Loverule's song Ye Gods! ye gave to me a Wife, composed an entirely new melody.<sup>3</sup> This was written in the style of a bourrée. Seedo's leaping melody, with its courtly associations, added to the more noble character of Sir John in the English piece. Similarly, Standfuss gave the German version of the song special emphasis; and in Der Teufel Herr Liebreich's song is written in a style with altogether

1. Hiller, Die verwandelten Weiber (Leipzig, 1770), p. 1.

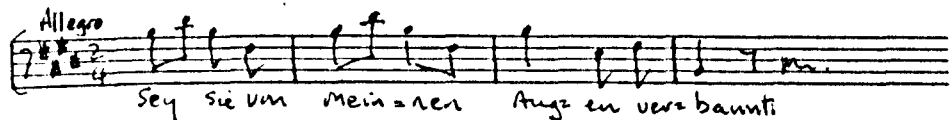
2. Ibid., p. 2. See also Appendix III, p. 331.

3. Coffey, The Devil to Pay (London 1731), p. 6.

more dignity than those written for the lower characters.<sup>1</sup> This is no da capo aria, but rather an extended arietta, and in keeping with the remaining numbers Standfuss introduces changes of speed which bind the music to the underlying drama. The opening melodic line conveys the gravity of the situation:<sup>2</sup>



The mood changes abruptly when he makes the painful decision to be separated from his wife. At this point Standfuss carries Liebreich's emotional turmoil into the music, bringing the melodic style closer to opera than might be expected from the simpler music associated with a Singspiel:<sup>3</sup>

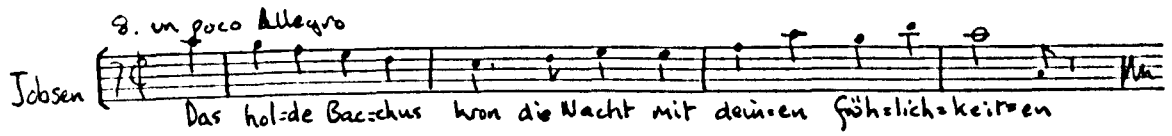


In this way, Standfuss introduced a remarkable measure of unity between his music and the drama that gave depth to the dramatic moments of the piece. A different example of the skill with which Standfuss was able to compose music which sustained moments of dramatic interest occurs during the party scene. At this point, the servants carried in their dishes laden with party fare, followed by the village guests. To accompany their entrance, Standfuss wrote a short ceremonial march, which was played to a carillon made by the actors clinking their glasses together as they walked in procession onto the stage.

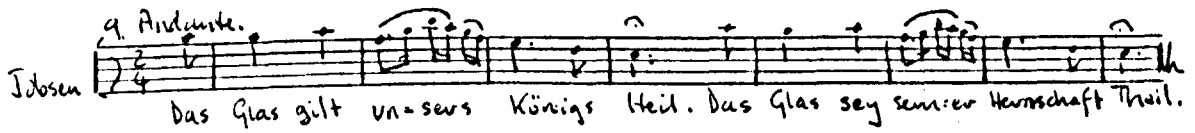
The songs for this scene were written in the form of strophic songs, a form dictated partly by Weisse's translation (the English version also

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1. A. Einstein, Lebenslaufe deutscher Musiker von ihnen selbst erzählt (Leipzig, 1915), 4 Bde. See Bd "Johann Adam Hiller", p. 24.
  2. Hiller, Die verwandelten Weiber (Leipzig, 1770), p. 22.
  3. Ibid. See also Appendix III, p. 383.

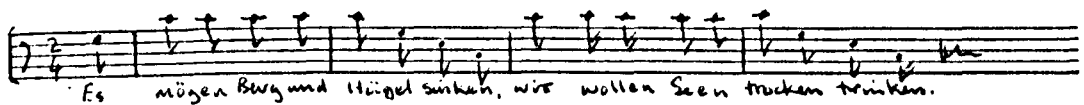
included included strophic songs at this point in the drama) and partly in response to the situation in which it is quite normal to find people singing songs. In the event, he composed a memorable song in praise of Bacchus:<sup>1</sup>



and a sublime musical setting for the toast to the royal family:<sup>2</sup>



The opening chorale-style melody then gives way to a brisker 'B' section reminiscent of the preceding drinking song:<sup>3</sup>



The resulting blend of music and spectacle won the immediate approval of the public and the piece proved to be an outstanding box office success.<sup>4</sup>

#### E. Some critical objections

As often happens when a play receives overwhelming support from the public, Der Teufel drew a sharp response from the critics, who saw

1. Mus. MSS 1190 (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek), ff. 15 et seq. See also Coffey, The Devil to Pay (London, 1731), pp. 4-5.
2. Mus. MSS 1190 (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek), ff. 18b et seq.
3. Ibid. Standfuss's songs exist in two different versions. They appear in the theatre manuscript of 1766 in what is most likely to be their original form. They are also included in Hiller's keyboard edition of the music to the expanded version of Der Teufel which was not published until 1770, four years later. In this version, the songs appear in a much altered form reflecting a considerable amount of skilful editing which must be attributed to Hiller, since by this time Standfuss had died. Both versions of the music appear in Appendix III, pp. 364-73.
4. Weisse, Selbstbiographie (Leipzig, 1806), p. 25.

beneath these these simple scenes of comedy a threat to the moral tone of the German theatre. Originally Koch had sought only to secure the financial position of his company by staging the Italian interludes then popular in Vienna, but in the eyes of his critics, led by Professor Gottsched, Koch's modest aspirations took on a rather different significance. Any actor-manager prepared to risk the reputation of the theatre in this way, for the sake of gain, was in Gottsched's view little more than a charlatan. Besides, he no doubt remembered the way in which he had been ridiculed in Weisse's comedy, Die Poeten nach der Mode. After his earlier quarrels with Schönnemann, the re-appearance of Der Teufel was more than Gottsched could bear, and with its continued success he involved himself in the public debate which ensued.

The play's seemingly endless streams of imprecation and invective, "Ihr lüderlichen Schurken und unverschämten Mensche ..." <sup>1</sup>, intended merely to amuse, offended those whose aims had been to raise standards of taste. Even worse were the bedroom scenes in which Lene and Frau Liebreich appeared en déshabillé, and in which, at one point, Frau Liebreich struck Jobsen over the head with a chamber pot, scenes that were the common core of farce. <sup>2</sup> The play's opponents, however, interpreted these stage antics as nothing less than a direct threat to the morals of the young and old alike.

For his part Weisse, having translated The Devil to Pay purely for its entertainment value, was surprised to find his work judged as though it was a work of art when, in fact, it was no more than a musical farce intended to meet the kind of demand normally supplied by the Italian interludes. <sup>3</sup>

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1. Weisse, Der Teufel ist los (Leipzig, 1777), pp. 23-7. When Frau Liebreich returns to find the party dancing, Weisse faithfully translates Coffey's terms of English invective as: lüderlichen Schurken, Schlingel, Spitzbube, Verflucht, Galgenschwengel and, elsewhere, Rabenaas.

2. Minor, Ch. F. Weisse (Innsbruck, 1880), p. 156.

3. Weisse, Selbstbiographie (Leipzig, 1806), p. 105.



Gottsched was incapable of appreciating the play for what it was. Instead, he saw the piece in terms of his own aspirations for the establishment of the German theatre, and consequently he regarded Der Teufel as an opera: a form to which he held a long-standing and deep aversion. His arguments against this form of entertainment had appeared in his treatise on the art of poetry - Versuch einer critischen Dichtkunst published in 1730. In this work, Gottsched expounded his view that plays should be written with the strictest regard to the rules of classical writing and that, above all, they should bring a sense of realism to the stage.<sup>1</sup> To this end, he had encouraged managers not only to dress their actors in appropriate costume, but also to cultivate an appropriate style of language for the tragedies they performed. For this reason he also campaigned with vigour against the performance of the Italian opera seria. A brief examination of his objections is instructive, for his rejection of the opera stemmed not from a dislike of music, but from his over-riding belief that the laws of Nature should be regarded as inviolable:<sup>2</sup>

The best and most reasonable marvel of poetry,  
including animate or lifeless things, stems from  
a faithful imitation of Nature.

His detestation of opera arose from the way in which librettists of the day ignored these principles, and thereby threatened to lower the standards of taste:<sup>3</sup>

In the opera, people think talk and behave quite differently from people in real life, and one would be taken for a fool, if one lived one's life as though in an opera. There, they see sorcery as though it were Truth - but truth demands order and reason in all things. In the opera, one sees people who lionise one another like Gods; sweet-hearts who languish at the feet of their loved ones and who wish only to take their own lives; Princes who, in the form of slaves, travel to

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1. J.C. Gottsched, Versuch einer critischen Dichtkunst (Leipzig, 1730), 2 Bde. See i, p. 195 et seq.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., ii, p. 739.

distant lands; Kings who risk their crowns for beautiful women, and like fantasies? How often does one hear talk of the stars, of an infant cursed from birth because of a squint-eyed glance; of gruesome thunderbolts betokening some soul in torment? All of these things are so unfamiliar to us they might be taken from a journal about Lilliput. Nevertheless, they are all to be found in the opera.

In many ways Gottsched's words echo the sentiments that English critics such as Steele and Collier expressed in their writings attacking the opera and which were published in the Spectator.<sup>1</sup> With Germany still emerging from the cultural abyss left in the aftermath of the Thirty Years' War, he felt that many archaic notions were a barrier to progress: that denigration of myth and popular superstition, combined with a direct appeal to man's intellect, were the surest ways of winning his ultimate goal: the pursuit of Truth. The Swiss party, perhaps because they had not shared the ravages endured by the German States during the Wars, took the opposing view, indeed, as did many of Gottsched's contemporaries. As Professor of Poetry in the University, however, he was given an effective platform from which to disseminate his ideas and enlighten his peers, especially by the direct means of instructing his students. This is not to say that Gottsched saw no opportunity for the inclusion of music in plays. On the contrary, he saw positive advantages in dressing certain scenes with music: especially the classical tragedies:<sup>2</sup>

Would it not be possible, instead of the old odes spoken by the chorus in the ancient tragedies, to insert one of our arias, or cantatas, suitably performed by a group of singers? but such a piece conceived so that it always arose out of the foregoing action, and which would consequently allow the spectator to reflect upon the moral of the piece. This would, without doubt, retain an appropriate mood and prepare the listener for the ensuing action of the drama. Such a tragedy would be ten times better than an opera!

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1. J.G. Robertson, A History of German Literature (London, 1970), pp. 220-234.

2. Gottsched, Versuch einer critischen Dichtkunst (Leipzig, 1730), ii, p. 624.

In the light of this, it can be seen that Gottsched's ideas raised many interesting possibilities, but his actor-manager protégés, already desperate to maintain their companies, would have found such a theatre venture difficult to produce and expensive to stage. Instead, they turned to simpler musical entertainments which were not so grandiose, but filled the house, perhaps only for a single performance, and even if they failed to please little was lost. Clearly, Der Teufel fell into this category, it was, after all, only one afterpiece among a number of similar stock entertainments.<sup>1</sup>

At first criticism was muted. One Schutz, a member of Gottsched's circle, delivered a discourse on the collapse of taste in the theatre, an event wisely ignored by Koch, since he was neither privileged to be present nor had he seen the paper. A little later, however, Gottsched acquired a French article dealing with matters relating to the English theatre, "Lettre sur le théâtre anglais avec une traduction de l'Avare, comédie de Mr Shadwell, et de la Femme de campagne, comédie de Mr Wycherley".<sup>2</sup> The article was a stroke of good fortune for Gottsched, probably despatched from Paris by his contact there, the Baron Grimm.<sup>3</sup> It contained most of Gottsched's objections already aired in his own treatise, but had the advantage of being supplied from a fresh outside source.<sup>4</sup> This unexpected support prompted Gottsched's party to publish an essay in which they listed their objections to Weisse's play - a miserable piece, with characterisation little better than the puppets popular at that time during fair-times - a bad piece to please bad poets.<sup>5</sup> The translator (Weisse was not referred to by name), with neither regard for virtue or good taste, was accused of caring only to

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1. Schöнемann had turned to Der Teufel, Frau Neuber had made her reputation playing in adaptations of Italian interludes.

2. Minor, Ch. F. Weisse (Innsbruck, 1880), p. 146.

3. Ibid., pp. 146-7.

4. Ibid. See also Gottsched, Versuch einer critischen Dichtkunst (Leipzig, 1730), ii, p. 640.

5. Minor, Ch. F. Weisse (Innsbruck, 1880), p. 147.

display his own understanding of English and his cleverness at turning it into makeshift German. The writer of the article then made a more general attack:<sup>1</sup>

There follows a magician, spirits, the devil,  
dances, disguises and a hundred other absurdities,  
to appeal to the weaker spirits among the rabble.

The writer went further onto the defensive:<sup>2</sup>

Was not the true purpose of the Stage to mock the  
follies of the times - and was this end not better  
served by the classical Stage.

This was the signal for the outbreak of the pamphlet war waged between those who supported Koch and the Gottsched party.

Koch took the time to prepare a masterly counter-stroke. Early the following year he advertised that due to exceptional circumstances Der Teufel would recieve its final performance on the 23rd February (1753). At the same time that the advertisement appeared, a rumour was put about that Gottsched was to be ridiculed on stage.<sup>3</sup>

At the end of the performance, Frau Koch stepped onto the stage and read an epilogue, Der komische Kritik, specially prepared by Steinel, one of Koch's supporters, in which an ironic verdict on the piece was delivered and which ended with the words:<sup>4</sup>

Deswegen hatten wir uns wirklich vorgenommen,  
Den Teufel weg zu thun. Doch es hat uns gereut,  
Und wir behalten ihn, wenn ihr's zufrieden seit.

With this, applause rang from every corner of the theatre accompanied by cries of da capo.<sup>5</sup>

Gottsched's influence was never at a lower ebb. Indeed, he was so

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid.

3. By all accounts, during the transformation scene the Doctor appeared wigged and dressed in a red robe while the furies appeared with quills on their heads: a gibe at Gottsched's theories on stage costumes.

4. Minor, Ch. F. Weisse (Innsbruck, 1880), p. 148.

5. "In this way, we really had resolved  
To put the Devil down ... but - we have relented  
We'll retain him yet - to keep you well contented."

incensed by Koch's action that he immediately lodged a suit for damages against him, and three days later wrote of his misgivings in the form of a letter to Herr von Dieskau, maître de plaisirs. He feared that his opponents at court might influence the judgement of the local magistrate. In the event his letter, couched in bad French, proved so risible that Dieskau circulated copies of the letter among Gottsched's opponents. Even worse, Graf von Brühl, the prime minister, also favoured Koch's case and so Gottsched's cause went from bad to worse.<sup>1</sup>

The outcome was that Koch was forced to acknowledge that he had gone too far, and he agreed to forbear from further personal ridicule of Gottsched from the stage. In exchange, the professor dropped his lawsuit. In this way both men salvaged something from the débâcle. Truly there had been 'the devil to pay' and, with this potential play on words, the pamphleteers were never short of material, but the two main protagonists never again directly opposed one another, wisely leaving such deeds to others.

One of Gottsched's most able supporters was his wife, herself an author of merit. When Baron Grimm sent a short humorous squib then circulating in Paris in which the French opera was attacked, Frau Gottsched saw its possibilities and her translation included suitable references to Koch's activities: Der kleine Prophet von Bömischbroda, mit bittern Anmerkungen auf Koch und auf die Operette: Der Teufel ist los. The joke was well received by the public and repaired some of the earlier damage sustained by the Gottsched party:<sup>2</sup>

Ein Schauspiel, das man Euch blos aus Gewinnsucht  
zeigt,  
Das nur der Pöbel liebt, und was dem Pöbel gleicht?

Koch's supporters were never silent for long, however, and it occurred

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1. Minor, Ch. F. Weisse (Innsbruck, 1880), p. 148.
  2. Blümner, Geschichte des Theaters (Leipzig, 1818), pp. 102-5.  
"A play shown, for certain, out of avarice,  
Liked only by the low, a mirror for the vulgar populace?"

that Rost, the prime minister's secretary, had to travel to Pfalz. For his amusement, Rost prepared a number of satirical verses addressed from the Devil to the Professor. They begin:<sup>1</sup>

Herr Professor, hör' Er doch an!  
Was hab'ich armer Teufel gethan,  
Da ich jungst einmal los gewesen,  
Dass Er mit seinem Kunstrichter bosen,  
Als ein grosser, baumstarker Knecht  
Nach mir gewarfen? Das ist nicht recht.

...

All hier bei Kochen der Teufel ist los!

...

Ich bin  
Sein  
Teufel\*\*

Rost read a sample of his lines at every post station before sealing a specimen and despatching it to Gottsched, who from this time on took no further part in matters relating to the theatre. Instead, he turned his attention away from the stage, devoting his time to the preparation of a new work on the history of the German stage, Vorrath zur Geschichte der deutschen dramatischen Dichtkunst.<sup>2</sup>

By this time, towards the end of 1753, Gottsched's opposition, far from damaging Koch's company, had even helped to keep the theatre full, furnishing the company with the best advertisement - notoriety, and with escapades like Rost's, spread news of the mischief far and wide. Thus, Der Teufel remained a conversation piece for some considerable time. Without Gottsched's intervention, it is possible that after its initial success, even allowing for the attractions of Standfuss's new music, the piece might have been 'rested'; it might even have shared the fate of its immediate forerunner and been lost, since the sole copies of the text

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1. Blümner, Geschichte des Theaters (Leipzig, 1818), p. 112. See also Minor, Ch. F. Weisse (Innsbruck, 1880), p. 151. Frau Gottsched prepared a riposte to Rost's squib found among her papers after her death:

Hört, Christen! eine neue Mähr:  
Rost is des Teufel's Secretär;  
Und dazu schickt er sich auch recht  
So wie der Herr, so wie der Knecht.

Graf von Brühl, Rost's employer, was a supporter of Koch.

2. Robertson, History of German Literature (London, 1970), p. 225.

remained in Koch's possession and in similar circumstances the earlier version used by Schönnemann appears to have attracted little in the way of interest. Instead, Weisse's translation was so widely performed that it remained popular long after the scandal had subsided.

The pamphlet war itself was a phenomenon of eighteenth-century society, and depended on close-knit social circles. In Paris a similar outbreak accompanied the arrival of the opera buffa<sup>1</sup> The bouffonists and anti-bouffonists attached themselves to factions at court. Those in favour of the opéra comique gathered at the court of the king. Those favouring the new Italian music were to be found at the queen's court, in much the same way as established figures were to be found at the English court, leaving outsiders to gather at the court of the Prince of Wales. The German version of this public dispute never took on such overt political overtones, even though one or two parallels are discernible.

The party led by Gottsched drew their support mainly from the circle of intellectuals drawn from the ranks of those educated in the University at Leipzig: the ranks of the bourgeoisie. Gottsched clearly recognised the advantage of cultivating the courtly circle. Indeed, his first recourse was to petition the prime minister, Graf von Brühl, but without success.

The fact was that the German courts were already well acquainted with the old opera seria and were equally well pleased with opera buffa. The lobby sought by Gottsched, therefore, did not exist; but as the self-appointed arbiter of German taste he found himself in a dilemma. If he took no action, he would appear to sanction this amusement and thereby encourage them: to expose their technical weaknesses might have been an acceptable course of action, but Gottsched's over-reaction to Weisse's translation of such a trivial English piece, which must have appeared sophisticated beside some of the lower Italian interludes, and then to

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1. Minor, Ch. F. Weisse, (Innsbruck, 1880), pp. 152-3.

judge it as though it was an art of work for the stage smacked of pomposity. This made Gottsched appear all the more risible and obviously added to the public's pleasure at his discomfort; a wiser man might well have simply remained silent.<sup>1</sup> As things stood, Standfuss's songs were on everyone's lips but, even worse from Gottsched's point of view, Koch's new company, which had been forced to open in the Enoch Richter's Garten, could now afford to remain in Leipzig's newest theatre in the Quandts Hof.<sup>2</sup> Ironically, this theatre was designed by Gottsched himself. Significantly, Weisse never uttered a word on the subject, choosing to remain entirely aloof from the conflict.

As the pamphlet war came to an end, the cultural life of Leipzig returned to more normal pace. By this time, of course, Weisse's translation of Coffey's old afterpiece had won a place in the company's repertoire alongside the more transient pieces that made up the comic interludes. The critics, in the meantime, ever reluctant to bow to popular taste, continued to admonish Koch for staging such trivial pieces between the acts of the tragedies.

The literary factions were not prepared to take into account the enormous business risks incurred in mounting such a large scale enterprise as running a theatre company. Gottsched had recruited actor-managers with the promise of a steady supply of good plays, but this goodwill was soon lost by his blind insistence that they staged only those plays which met with his approval. Such a course of action might have been tenable with the support of a single-minded, wealthy patron, as

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1. Gottsched staked everything on his opposition to Koch's theatre company, and lost his reputation. Nevertheless, his single-minded efforts to reform German poetry did achieve worthwhile results. The German nobility, while formerly more conversant with the literature of France, had been made aware of their own contemporary authors, and the rising generation of poets and playwrights built upon the foundation which Gottsched's work had provided. Gottsched's contribution to the founding of modern German literature appears to have been denigrated as a result of the débâcle surrounding his action against Koch and the Singspiel, Der Teufel ist los.

2. Blümner, Geschichte des Theaters (Leipzig, 1818), pp. 80-9.



had long been the case with the Italian opera.<sup>1</sup> In the event, Gottsched lost the support of those most likely to help his cause, as first Schönmann in Berlin and then the Neubers in Leipzig turned away from him. Then, finally, he lost his credibility and his reputation amid the débâcle over Der Teufel: with this, the opportunity to continue exerting any influence in theatre matters came to an end, and although his contribution proved invaluable to the rising generation of actors and playwrights his misplaced zeal brought only ridicule.

Meanwhile, the dilemma facing theatre-managers remained: in order to survive, they had no alternative but to appeal to the public at large. Fine plays might or might not improve standards of taste, but this could not be computed in terms of box office success. Indeed, it could have been argued that interludes, by attracting people who would not otherwise have spent an evening in the theatre at all, enabled the company to mount many classical plays that impinged but little upon the lives of some of the people who saw them. Der Teufel, no doubt, was a better piece than many of the stock interludes, and secured the fortunes of the actors for some considerable time, but it was not long before circumstances led Koch to commission a second afterpiece from Weisse.

#### F. The Seven Years' War and its effects on theatre life

The event which signalled a change in Koch's fortunes was the outbreak of the Seven Years' War in 1756. During the Wars of the Austrian Succession (1740-48) the Prussians under Frederick II had seized the province of Silesia. Having put their house in order, the Austrians made an alliance with the French with the object of regaining their lost territories. They were also able to persuade the Swedes and the Russians to assist their cause. The Elector of Saxony, Frederick Augustus II (also

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1. Opera seria was maintained at court in Berlin and in Dresden.

king of Poland) joined the alliance.

Frederick met this threat by forming an alliance with Hanover and Great Britain, and more characteristically by invading Saxony, in order to eliminate the Elector's army from the War. The Prussian invasion came on the 29th August 1756, and they entered the capital, Dresden, on the 10th September. The small Saxon army retired to Pirna, but a decisive action by the Prussians brought hostilities to an end and the Saxons were forced to surrender to Frederick on the 16th October. Thereafter, the Saxon army fought with the Prussians while the Elector of Saxony, Frederick Augustus, retired to his Polish estates.

The following year a combined force of French and Austrian troops threatening to attack Berlin were caught by Frederick at the village of Rossbach, some twenty-five miles from Leipzig. Even though the allied force numbering forty thousand men outnumbered the Prussian army by two to one, the Prussians inflicted a heavy defeat on the allies.

As the fortunes of war changed, the Saxons once more found themselves caught up in the fighting, when the French under General Dann took the capital, Dresden, on the 21st November 1759. The Prussians counter-attacked the following year, laying siege to Dresden, which suffered severe damage in the ensuing bombardment.

The war ended when the alliance between the Austrians and the Russians was broken by the death of the Russian Empress Elizabeth. Peter III then arranged a treaty between Sweden and Prussia which so weakened the cause of the French and the Austrians that it was useless to engage in further hostilities, and under the terms of the Treaty of Hubertusberg, signed on the 15th February 1763, the Prussians retained Silesia.<sup>1</sup>

#### G The effects of the War on theatre life in Leipzig

With the outbreak of the War in 1756, it soon became obvious that a

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1. Encyclopaedia Britannica, "The Seven Years' War" (London, 1943-74), 15<sup>th</sup> edition.

centre of trade like Leipzig would be severely affected by the War. In anticipation of the event, Koch disbanded his company and made preparations to leave the city. As it happened, he received the news that his old rival and former employer, Frederick Schönnemann, had retired from the theatre business. The company, stranded in Lübeck and reluctant to disband, invited Koch to become their new manager.<sup>1</sup> In the circumstances, he accepted and joined them in Lübeck shortly before the Easter of 1758.

Koch soon realised that he needed a new attraction, and wrote to Weisse (whose employment had required him to remain in Leipzig) asking him to prepare a translation of the second part of Coffey's The Devil to Pay. This was also a one-act afterpiece, given in England under the title of The Merry Cobler.<sup>2</sup> This piece, in the form of a Nachspiel with music supplied once more by Standfuss, received its première in Lübeck under its German title, Der lustige Schuster, on the 18th January 1759.<sup>3</sup>

The piece enjoyed a measure of success, though how great this was is open to question. In England, The Merry Cobler did not even survive its first night. In Germany, the piece was so well received that eventually Weisse expanded it into a full-length entertainment, but this version was not written until 1768. Significantly, Weisse wrote the piece in response to a commission not from Koch, but from another theatre manager, Schuh.<sup>4</sup> Interestingly enough, the later version was never staged by Koch.<sup>5</sup>

In the meantime, Weisse's literary career had taken on a new direction, as he turned his attention to criticism. To this end he renewed

1. Blümner, Geschichte des Theaters (Leipzig, 1806), p. 117.

2. Coffey, The Merry Cobler, or the second part of The Devil to Pay: a farcical Opera in one Act (London, 1735).

3. Weisse, Selbstbiographie (Leipzig, 1806), p. 41. According to Gerber's Lexicon, Standfuss was already dead. This is now open to question since another Singspiel with music by Standfuss was performed with success in 1759. See also Minor, Ch. F. Weisse (Innsbruck, 1880), p. 138.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

his contacts with his friends Mendelsohn and Nicholai, members of the Bremer Beyträge, both of whom exerted some influence on the literary life of the times.<sup>1</sup> Also, Weisse continued to write for the stage, and during 1758-59 he was busily engaged in preparing two tragedies, Eduard den dritten and Richard den dritten. Both plays were adaptations from the works of Shakespeare and they indicate the high esteem in which Weisse continued to hold English plays.<sup>2</sup>

#### G. Weisse's stay in Paris

Weisse's literary endeavours were cut short by the demand from his employer, the Graf von Geyersberg, that Weisse should accompany him on a visit to Paris. This visit was to prove a fine opportunity for Weisse to acquaint himself with some of the finest literary minds of the day, men known to him so far only through correspondence or by reputation, for many were contributors to the Encyclopédie.<sup>3</sup> Above all, it brought Weisse into direct contact with the musical life of the French capital.

The Graf von Geyersberg and Weisse arrived in Paris on the 21st November 1759, and stayed at a pension situated in a pleasant neighbourhood near the Palais de Luxembourg.<sup>4</sup> Their landlord, Mr Toussaint, a legal adviser to the Parlement, had recently written a book, Les Moeurs; he kept a comfortable house and his dinner table boasted a fine company of ex-patriots, but beyond this, their hosts went out of their way to obtain invitations to the better houses on behalf of their guests.<sup>5</sup>

Weisse found Paris a store-house of knowledge and architectural splendour. Besides these novelties, he met the foremost men of Letters. Wille, with whom formerly he had only corresponded, he now met in person,

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1. Robertson, History of German Literature (London, 1970), p. 251.

2. See below, Chapter Four, pp. 232-9.

3. Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire raisonné des Sciences, des Arts et des Métiers (Paris, 1750-1765), 28 volumes.

4. Weisse, Selbstbiographie (Leipzig, 1806), pp. 62-8.

5. Ibid., p. 64.

along with a host of others: most notable among whom was the contributor to the Encyclopédie, Jean le Rond D'Alembert. His greatest pleasure, however, was to meet Jean Jacques Rousseau, whose Devin du Village Weisse had seen only a few days earlier. When asked why he had written such a piece, Rousseau delivered a characteristically disarming reply, "it was nothing, a trifle. I only did it to see what fools the French are, to be able to relish such a wretched thing."<sup>1</sup>

Much as Weisse prized these meetings, his passion was for the theatre and scarcely an evening passed by when he failed to see a play or an opera. His commentary is illuminating, especially in the light of his efforts to improve his appreciation of the German stage; and although his judgement might have been biased in favour of his countrymen, it is more likely that his training in criticism enabled him to make an objective assessment of the entertainments that he saw.<sup>2</sup>

Weisse reported that among the leading French actors of the day Le Kain, Brissard and Grandval were all good in tragedies, but by the same token Weisse considered German actors such as Koch and Eckhof to be equally good, and not only in drama, but also in comedy; he found no Parisian actor, for example, with the fire of a Molière or a player of the classical comedy to compare with the German actor Bruck; in this respect, Weisse concluded that the German stage compared very favourably with that of Paris.

In terms of musical entertainments, however, a rather different picture emerged. He was delighted by the Italian operettas with their parodies, attractive melodies and, above all, their superior dancing.<sup>3</sup> These delights, however, were overshadowed by the attractions of the opéras comiques. Weisse found these productions superior to those of the Italians in a number of ways. For example, the plots were built

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1. Weisse, Selbstbiographie (Leipzig, 1806), pp. 62-8.

2. Ibid., pp. 66-7.

3. Ibid., p. 109 et seq.

around simple tales of innocence, for the most part surrounding the lives of common country folk. The songs they sang, composed in an attractive, melodious style, sounded entirely natural coming from the mouths of such people; neither did they resort to grotesque caricature or mere buffoonery in order to generate laughter. In the hands of artists like Favart, these entertainments added to the social life of the city, for in every place that people gathered in the evenings to enjoy themselves the latest theatre songs were to be heard. In this way, Weisse came to know the opéra comique at first hand, and he was deeply and lastingly impressed.<sup>1</sup>

#### H. Sedaine's version of The Devil to Pay

It must have been during his stay in Paris that Weisse came to know the French version of The Devil to Pay.<sup>2</sup> This was Le diable à quatre by Michèle Jean Sedaine.<sup>3</sup> Originally a stone-mason by trade, Sedaine had risen to become one of the foremost writers of these pieces at the time of Weisse's stay in Paris. During his early life, Sedaine had amused himself writing pieces for the stage until his talent was recognised by Jean Monet, the director of the opéra comique, who asked him to prepare a full-length version of The Devil to Pay. This was based on a translation of the English text by one Patu, a minor author, who had seen a performance of The Devil to Pay at the Garrick Theatre in London.<sup>4</sup> Sedaine expanded the afterpiece into three acts, revealing the scope that Coffey's piece offered a skilful and imaginative adapter to improve both the plot and the characterisation.

The musical treatment of Le diable à quatre was typically French and

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1. Weisse, Selbstbiographie (Leipzig, 1808), pp. 102-4.

2. Ibid.

3. M.J. Sedaine, Oeuvres choisies de Sedaine (Paris, 1830), 3 vols. See "Le diable à quatre", i, pp. 135-90.

4. L. Arnoldson, Sedaine et les Musiciens de son Temps (Paris, 1934), p. 73. See also M. Patu, Choix de petites pièces du Théâtre Anglais (Paris, 1756).

relied heavily on the tradition of the vaudevilles. This tradition had originally grown out of the rivalry between the French and Italian troupes of comedians, dating from the royal marriages arranged during the sixteenth century.<sup>1</sup> Then, Italian princesses brought their own troupes of entertainers and they were licensed to perform in Paris. With the passage of time they spoke less and less Italian, which brought them into conflict with the French actors. In 1697 the king exercised his prerogative and expelled them.

The vacuum they left was soon filled by various groups of strolling players, the foraines, who, so as not to compete with the theatres, cultivated the musical aspect of their shows, introducing street songs and dances to illustrate the story lines of their pieces. Audiences drummed up at the fairs of St Germain or by the famous bridge, the Pont Neuf, were treated to musical shows celebrated for their naughtiness and made up entirely of street songs. These were selected with the greatest of care so that the subject of the exciting song matched the dramatic situation the tune was intended to illustrate.

It was but a short step from this kind of piece to inserting sections of written dialogue and composing songs and dances especially to meet the needs of a particular show. These entertainments, however, continued to end in the now traditional vaudeville ballad, during which each of the main actors bids the audience farewell with a verse containing a moral drawn from the preceding entertainment.

In these entertainments, the traditional French characters originating in the commedia dell'arte, Scaramouche and Harlequin, had disappeared. So had the vulgarity which had been a prominent feature of these entertainments. Instead, the characters of the new pieces were drawn from village life, and portrayed as simple, artless people, who lived in an

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1. Arnoldson, Sedaine et les Musiciens de son Temps (Paris, 1934), pp. 17-22.

idealised world, a world in which naughtiness was expressed in frank, childlike terms. This was the substance of what by the 1750s had become the opéras comiques. These were the entertainments that so interested Weisse during his stay in Paris during 1759-60.

### Le diable à quatre

Sedaine retained all the characters from Coffey's afterpiece, giving them names more appropriate to the status of their French counterparts. Thus, Sir John and his termagant wife become the marquis and marquise, while Jobson and Nell, now known as Jacques and Margot, live in a cottage close by the château. Sedaine, however, allows the magician, Doctor Zambalamuc, to summon to his assistance not only his two spirits, but also a host of furies.

The musical settings comprise seventy vaudeville tunes, six ariettes, most probably borrowed, and a number of dances. Although there is no overture, it is certain that some music was supplied for the opening. Such a musical design places Le diable à quatre midway between the old entertainments supplied by the foraines, and made up from vaudevilles with inserted dialogue, and the more modern opéra comique.

Sedaine introduced substantial changes to Coffey's afterpiece version, though the basic plot remained much the same as in the English original. For example, Sedaine cut the entire opening scene in the cobbler's cottage, preferring to open his version of the play with the scene in which the servants, taking their ease in the château, sit complaining about their mistress. Sedaine then wrote his own version of the play along the lines suggested by the plot of the English afterpiece. After the transformation, which brings the first act to its close, Sedaine introduced several episodes to extend the hilarious scenes which ensue between the cobbler Jacques and the marquise. These scenes make up the second act, while Margot's experiences as the marquise provide the bulk of the material for the third and final act. The whole piece concludes with the



vaudeville finale.

I. Le diable à quatre: synopsis (1756)

The curtain rises to reveal the kitchen inside the château. In a series of vaudevilles, first the cook and then the servants Lucille and Marton, maids to the marquise, sing of their employer's bad temper. Indeed, even as they sing, the marquise quits the château in high dudgeon. This leads the servants to reflect upon their master's misfortune at marrying such a beautiful woman only to find that she has such an uncontrollable temper. Even allowing for her good looks, they are puzzled by his complacency, especially considering her cruelty to him. Clearly, there is something woefully wrong, and they resolve to consult master Jacques, the cobbler, an expert on such matters. Jacques arrives just at that moment, and dismissing their concern he proclaims a piece of news of much greater importance to them: the marquis has given him ten crowns so that they might enjoy themselves.

In response to this news, more of the servants appear, singing a song to celebrate the departure of their mistress. Amid the throng, Jacques catches a glimpse of Father Ambrose, the blind hurdy-gurdy player from the cabaret, who loudly demands a drink. The party is just beginning to get under way when they are all subjected to the dreadful experience of witnessing the unexpected return of their mistress, the marquise. Seeing the disorder about her, she flies into a rage, boxing the ears of those closest to her, and drives all of the guests from her kitchen, and indeed out of the château. At that moment, the marquise finds Father Ambrose, as yet unaware of the reason for the uproar. He is desolate, however, when the marquise, in a further fit of temper, breaks his hurdy-gurdy over his head - his sole means of support. The marquis, now thoroughly shamed by his wife's behaviour, compensates the man and leads him to safety.

In the midst of the ensuing confusion, a knock is heard on the outside door. It turns out to be Doctor Zambalamuc, a magician. As soon as the marquise sees him, she drives him away, once more leaving the marquis to face the embarrassment of apologising for his wife's behaviour. As he does so, he directs the man to Jacques' cottage. The magician, however, angered by his humiliation, secretly resolves to take his revenge.

At this point Margot, the cobbler's wife, having heard rumours of dancing, appears in search of amusement. Instead of which, she finds the company already dispersed. Apparently alone, and with nothing better to do, she resolves to try a rare and forbidden pleasure - a pinch of snuff. Just then she notices the magician, who explains that he is looking for Jacques' farm. Margot, delighted at the prospect of company, leads him to the house.

In return for her kindness, the magician reads her hand and foretells of a coming change in her fortunes, that she will become a marquise, and warns her to discharge her duties with confidence when she finds herself in her new position of authority. Thus the magician, with the plan for revenge already well in mind, directs Margot to wait beneath the big oak tree in the village.

As soon as she leaves him, Doctor Zambalamuc summons up his two assistants, and with them a host of sprites and demons. They appear as plumed galants, priests and procurers and, taking their patron, engage in a dance of revenge. When the dancing ceases, the magician directs them to convey the marquise to the cobbler's cottage, and carry Margot to the château while their husbands are still asleep, so that no-one will be aware of their transformation.

### Act Two

The scene reveals the marquise lying on the bed, and Jacques lying on the floor. One of the departing demons, pausing to admire his handi-

work, carefully places the cobbler's head on a stool.

The cobbler wakes up, struggling to remember the events of the previous night, and takes a finger of brandy to fortify himself against the day. As he finishes his drink, the ill-tempered marquise wakes up in the strange bed, complaining at the meanness of her surroundings and calls loudly for her servants to attend her. Jacques, thinking his wife has taken leave of her senses, eventually runs out of patience and threatens her with his strap, forcing her to carry out the menial task of spinning thread for the day's work.

They are disturbed by the arrival of Lucille, the maid, who has come to collect her mistress's slippers. The marquise is incensed when she overhears her maid's description of her, and even more annoyed when Lucille fails to recognise her plight. At this, the marquise boxes her maid's ears. Whereupon Jacques takes his strap, forcing the marquise, by now speechless with rage, to make her apologies to Lucille on her knees. With matters settled, Jacques and Lucille conclude that his wife is either sick or bewitched. As Lucille departs the marquise, seizing her opportunity to escape, takes to her heels, leaving Jacques aghast at this unheard of breach of his authority. This proves to be the final straw, and Jacques resolves to punish her.

### Act Three

Meanwhile, Margot wakes up amid such luxurious surroundings in the boudoir that she is convinced that she is waking up in heaven. Then, remembering the events of the previous night, she realises that it must be the result of the magician's handiwork. Even as she runs her fingers through her hair she discovers that she is wearing earrings. Surprised by this discovery, she looks in the mirror and sees that her appearance is quite transformed, but recalls hearing of how great ladies have looking-glasses that never reveal their true likeness. As Margot ponders upon these strange events, she is disturbed by the approach of her

servants coming to wake her. Fearful of being discovered and finding no better place in which to hide she takes refuge in the great bed, pretending to be asleep.

Lucille approaches the bed expecting her mistress to strike her, but instead she is amazed to be called softly by her name. Margot gets up, still apprehensive at the prospect of being recognised as the cobbler's wife; but Lucille simply straightens her mistress's nightcap, helps her out of bed, and begins her toilet. Chatting as she works, Lucille asks her mistress which hat she will wear, the cabriolet or the rinosauce, and informs her that her chocolate is ready. Margot, thinking that chocolate is just another kind of bonnet, asks to try it on. Lucille, however, puts this gaffe down to the general change in her mistress.

Margot tastes the chocolate but finds it to be too bitter for her taste, and instead she asks for a little bread and some cider. With this, the butler appears and suggests, perhaps, some wine. As the butler departs, the coachman takes his place and Margot is granted her dearest wish when she orders her own great carriage for the day.

Meanwhile, below stairs, the servants are overjoyed at the change in their fortunes and rush to report the good news to their master. The marquis, puzzled by this unexpected turn of events, goes to his wife and is surprised at the extent of the change that has taken place in her. At the same time, Margot finds in the marquis all those qualities that she has previously failed to find in Jacques, and they fall in love.

These joyous scenes, however, are rudely disturbed by the unexpected arrival of the marquise, noisily demanding that her servants recognise her. Margot alone responds - shocked at being confronted by herself - she asks Lucille the stranger's name and hears in wonder that the woman is the cobbler's wife.

The blank faces of the household have a profound effect on the marquise, when at last she is forced to acknowledge her previous faults.

As she considers her position, Jacques arrives to take her back home, terrifying her once more with his threats. Margot, unable to witness any more of this distressing spectacle, retires. Jacques, meanwhile, takes out his strap, and he is on the point of leading the marquise away when the magician unexpectedly returns, and intervenes.

He confesses to the marquis the details of his revenge, assuring him that his wife is now purged of her faults; and with a powerful incantation, he removes the spell.

Assured that nothing untoward has occurred, the two couples are reunited. The marquise embraces Margot as her friend and taking the marquis's purse compensates Jacques for the blows she has given him.

With this, the servants gather amid general sounds of merrymaking and the marquis and marquise leave them to enjoy themselves. As they leave, the dancers enter leading Father Ambrose by the hand. The old man enters reluctantly, fearing the consequences of such a folly, but all is well. They give him a hurdy-gurdy and ask him to play. He agrees on the condition that they will give him a drink; he sings, but the company takes up the refrain of his song with such enthusiasm that he is forced to continue playing, and amid these scenes of jollity the play ends.

Just as in London in 1731 and in Leipzig in 1752, the operetta was an instant success. Indeed, the music was again so well received that several of its numbers won lasting popularity. To some extent this must have been due to the fact that the tunes were already well known, for Sedaine's collaborator, François André Danican-Philidor (1726-1795), later to make his reputation as a composer for the opéra comique, adapted some seventy 'ponts neufs' and composed six new ariettes to make up the score for Le diable à quatre.<sup>1</sup>

Philidor's first great passion had been chess: a game at which he excelled and which had already brought him fame when the Duke of

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1. Arnoldson, Sedaine (Paris, 1934), pp. 75-6.

Cumberland had invited him to visit London. There it was that he achieved the feat of being the first man to win three games of chess played simultaneously without seeing any of his opponents' boards. His first book appeared about this time: Analyse du jeu des échecs, printed in London during 1749.<sup>1</sup> From this it is clear that Philidor stayed in the city long enough to have seen the ballad-opera, then all the rage.

Philidor, however, borrowed nothing from the ballad-opera. Instead, he brought together two strands of popular French music: the vaudevilles or ponts neufs (as they were also known) and the ariettes that in the future would serve the opéras comiques. The vast majority of the songs, therefore, were set to existing song tunes, carefully selected for their existing associations with the action they were intended to support. Thus, when Margot tries her pinch of snuff, she sings these lines:<sup>2</sup>

Je n'aimois pas le tabac beaucoup:  
J'en prenois peu, souvent point du tout:  
Mais mon mari me defend cela,  
Depuis ce moment-la.  
Je le trouve piquant  
Quand  
J'en peux prendre à l'écart;  
Car  
Un plaisir vaut son prix,  
Pris  
En dépit des maris.

The tune selected for this song - Rabant et prenant du tabac (rubbing and taking tobacco) already held associations with the subject of the song, a fact which, presumably, only added to the pleasure of the contemporary audiences.

In this way most of the scenes were constructed in the style of the vaudeville theatre, and such dialogue as exists serves only to link the succession of songs together. Philidor included a number of ariettes, most probably borrowed from the opera buffa, but there were only six of them and if they were the work of Philidor, they do not bear his name,

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1. Danican-Philidor, Analyse du jeu des échecs (London, 1749).

2. Sedaine, Le diable à quatre (Paris, 1830), p. 146.

nor do they take any of the musical interest from the vaudeville tunes.

The tune Philidor chose for the finale supplied both atmosphere and wit, for the situation required a tune which would not sound out of place when played on the hurdy-gurdy. In addition to this, the music was intended to provide the finale to an English play. Philidor chose for the vaudeville ending a contre-danse, a dance form that itself had originated in England. Thus, the 'country dance' supplied the country dance required by the scene - a drollery in keeping with the times. Aside from the music, however, closer examination of the French text reveals at once Sedaine's acceptance of the English plot, but also extensive alterations to some matters of detail, and some significant omissions, especially in the light of Weisse's subsequent alterations to his own version of the piece.

#### J. Sedaine's alterations to the English plot

In England, the loyal toast to the king and all his royal family had almost certainly contributed to the play's success and (subsequently) to its survival from the earliest days, dating from the reign of James II. Later in London this small scene had been greatly emphasised by the addition of music in the afterpiece. In Germany, this same scene had served Schönnemann equally well as the reason for staging the piece to mark the birthday of King Frederick in 1743, and it is obvious from Standfuss's treatment of the music of this same scene in 1752 that equal importance was attached to it.<sup>1</sup>

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1. See above, p. 75. In this scene, Standfuss sets the first drinking song to a typical buffa-style melody. The opening words of the next song - Dies Glas gilt unsers Fürsten Heyl - are set to a musical phrase that strongly reflects the solemnity of the pledge:



Mus. MSS 1190 (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek), f. 18b.

changes is to be found in the literary wrangles then part of contemporary cultural life, which centred upon French criticism of the characterisation in English comedy.<sup>1</sup>

Also, it is clear from his alterations that Sedaine shared Gottsched's misgivings over this criticism. The question of characterisation had already been raised during the pamphlet war in Leipzig, when it had been asserted that:<sup>2</sup>

Eines der klügsten heutigen Völker läuft haufenweis  
in Schauspiele die nicht viel besser sind, als  
unsere Marionetten.

There is no doubt that inconsistencies existed in the characterisation of English moral comedy. Moreover, because Coffey's one-act after-piece was cut down from Jevon's full-length play, some of these weaknesses appeared to be exaggerated and introduced incongruities into the action. This point is easily appreciated in terms of the function of the play form on the English stage.

As mentioned already, Jonson's corrective-comedy retained pronounced similarities with its immediate antecedent, the morality play.<sup>3</sup> In these plays characters and plot served to underpin the basic purpose of the action, intended to enact certain tenets of the Christian faith. In Jonson's plays these ancient themes were adapted so as to form the basis of this reformed comedy. The crux of this formal design lay in the way that the characters in the Moralities, representing Good or Evil, vied with one another for the soul of Everyman, for this was the basic plan that Johnson also employed. Within the ritual struggle that ensued during the course of the action there arose a convention that evil-doers, having awakened the wrath of the Devil, would themselves fall victim to his anger, leaving the forces of Good to win the day.

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1. See Molière's famous play *Le misanthrope*.

2. Minor, Ch. F. Weisse (Innsbruck, 1880), p. 146, "The most judicious of today's audiences flock to performances of [*Der Teufel*] not much better than those provided by our [German] marionettes."

3. See above, pp. 9-11.



Yet, when writing for a Parisian audience in 1756, Sedaine discarded this portion of the party scene altogether. Indeed, the party scene in Le diable à quatre is scarcely long enough to render the marquise's anger credible when she finds her servants making free with her house.

Sedaine altered the play in other important respects. The earthy English dialogue is much refined, serving for the most part only a comic purpose in the second act, when the marquise is confronted by Jacques' determined opposition to her will: the transformation scene serves as a vehicle to satirise Parisian life by way of juxtaposing priests with procurers in the guise of demons, which undoubtedly reflected the taste of the middle-class audiences the opéra comique served. Yet, interesting as these differences are, they were not the most important of Sedaine's alterations.

One of his greatest gifts was the economy with which he could portray a character - a great benefit during the days of the vaudeville theatre, when a few lines of a song could provide a skilful actor with sufficient material to create convincing characters within the conventions of the genre.

In this respect, Sedaine's alterations profoundly altered the balance of the original characterisation. In The Devil to Pay Nell is a timid, dutiful housewife, whereas in Le diable à quatre her counterpart, Margot, is confident enough to go out alone - and mischievous enough to try a forbidden pinch of snuff. The character of the cobbler undergoes a comparable but complementary transformation. The strong, overbearing character of Jobson in The Devil to Pay gives way to the more refined, sophisticated character of Jacques in Le diable à quatre. Sedaine achieved this transformation by simply omitting those episodes in which the cobbler threatens or bullies his wife. This omission immediately shifted the emphasis between the two 'lower' characters and made the cobbler a much more engaging character. One possible reason for these

Interestingly enough, Jonson found that such a scheme appeared to work even better on stage when the Virtue-characters were deliberately drawn to be weak - the better to fall victim to the temptations of Sin and Experience. Then, with the Vices finally vanquished at the end of the play, the Virtue-characters emerged triumphant and emphasised the Christian tenet that virtue earns its own reward.

In the hands of Jevon, this convention can be seen to operate clearly enough, not only within his own full-length play The Devil of a Wife, but also within Coffey's one-act afterpiece. The virtuous Nell is portrayed as a dutiful, innocent housewife, the better to fall temptation to the to the magician's easy promise of a life of luxury and ease. Shorn of the protective padding of the full-length play, however, Nell scarcely appears on stage before being transformed into Lady Loverule, a state of affairs which then gives rise to inconsistencies within the drama.

In Coffey's version, Nell voices her lack of confidence in discharging her duties as lady of the manor:<sup>1</sup>

Nell:       O dear sir! I shall be mightily  
              asham'd. I want Dacity when I come  
              before great Folks.

Doctor:     You must be confident, and fear nothing ...

Sedaine saw the potential of Patu's translation well enough, but he was also aware of its weaknesses. Nell as a humble Virtue-character lacked credibility as a woman about to be confronted with the responsibility of moving in a higher social circle, where she was destined not only to win the love of the marquis, but also the respect of her servants.

Significantly, Sedaine recast the opening of the play, discarding the scene in which Jacques would have imposed his dominion over her, threatening to strap her before forbidding her to go to the party. Instead, the servants send for Jacques and then, only after the party guests have been driven away, Margot arrives on the scene in search of

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1. Coffey, The Devil to Pay (London, 1731), p. 10.

amusement and dancing. When she finds none, she demonstrates enough independence and strength of character to try a pinch of snuff. These adjustments, while trivial enough in themselves, render later developments in the plot, especially Margot's experiences in the château, altogether more credible.

The second Virtue-character in the play, the marquis, remains the typical hen-pecked husband. Sedaine retained this role in the same form, but whereas in the English play Lord Loverule emerges as a figure of strength, rewarding Jobson for his good work, Sedaine redraws the scene so that the repentant marquise takes her husband's purse and compensates Jacques for the blows he suffered at her hands during the course of her corrective treatment.

In this way, Sedaine borrowed freely from the traditional English moral characters but, at the same time, he corrected some of the more apparent inconsistencies in the drama. This and some of the pieces by Madame Favart - La clochette, Annette et Lubin and Ninette à la Cour, so impressed Weisse that he resolved to adapt them for the German stage; but above all else Le diable à quatre presented Weisse with an immediate aim and he decided to revise this piece as soon as circumstances permitted.<sup>1</sup>

After a lengthy sojourn in Paris, the Graf von Geyersburg became so anxious to return home that he would not consider any but the most direct route back to Saxony; and so in May 1760, the two men set out on their return journey to Leipzig.<sup>2</sup>

Back at home once more, Weisse's employer resolved to engage a Hofmeister more sympathetic to his requirements, and so Weisse was forced to look for alternative employment. Through the good offices of his employer's uncle he was fortunate enough to secure the promise of a place

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1. Weisse, Selbstbiographie, (Leipzig, 1806), p. 104.

2. Ibid., p. 75.

in the local tax offices. The offer, however, depended upon a post falling vacant, and so Weisse was once more free to turn his attention to literary matters until he was called upon to take up his appointment. During this time, he wrote another tragedy, Mustapha und Zeangir, translated the war songs of Tyrtus and composed some of his Amazon Lieder.<sup>1</sup> Also he renewed correspondence with his friends in the theatre, the actor-managers Eckhof and Koch, who were still in Hamburg taking refuge from the effects of the war.

Towards the end of 1761, Weisse received news that the local tax inspector, Commissioner Gerber, had fallen ill: within a few days the unfortunate man was dead, and Weisse took up his new post, wishing in his heart that Commissioner Gerber had enjoyed better health.<sup>2</sup>

#### K. Koch's commission for a new Singspiel

In the meantime, Koch had managed to keep the old Schönnemann company together. In Hamburg they had avoided the worst effects of the war, but they had not made the profits that would have been available to them in Leipzig in peacetime. Upon the cessation of hostilities in 1763, Koch brought his company back to Leipzig. He was immediately offered the licence for the capital, Dresden, which he was obliged to accept, and so for the next three years he was unable to restore his company to the prosperity it had formerly enjoyed.<sup>3</sup> Though Koch did find one unexpected advantage, in that he was able to stage rather better plays for the audiences in Dresden.

As soon as he could, Koch returned to Leipzig and re-opened his old theatre in the Quandt's Hof on the 5th September 1765.<sup>4</sup> His return must have been warmly received by the citizens, and from one citizen in

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1. Ibid., pp. 90-1.

2. Ibid., p. 93.

3. Blümner, Geschichte des Theaters (Leipzig, 1818), p. 125.

4. Ibid.

particular, for Gottlieb Benedict Zemisch undertook to endow a brand-new theatre in the Ranstädter Thore.<sup>1</sup> Within the space of a few months, Koch had moved into these new premises and had re-established his company as a leading attraction in the city's cultural life.<sup>2</sup>

Some time during 1765 Koch commissioned Weisse to prepare a new and expanded version of Der Teufel ist los. The central aim of this enterprise was to restore the fortunes of Koch's company to something approaching its pre-war level of security. Before the war, Koch's blend of spectacle and farce in Der Teufel had so captured the imagination of the German public that the piece had become their own cause célèbre against Professor Gottsched. Also, it must be remembered that this public support had been due, in no small part, to the skill with which Standfuss had decorated Weisse's scenes with songs, dances and music. Clearly, something along these lines would probably be greeted with a similar success. Der Teufel had already proved to be a suitable piece, but it needed an element of novelty if it was to attract new audiences.

Impressed as Weisse had been by his recent visit to Paris and his evenings spent at the opéras comiques, it might have seemed perfectly natural for him to have adapted Sedaine's solution to the same problem. Then, he could have adapted Le diable à quatre and adapted it as an entirely new play. With the addition of new music and given Weisse's considerable knowledge and experience of the theatre, it is possible that such a piece would have been successful; but the question was not so much to create the possibility of a success as to exploit a box office attraction already in existence - and one that the public had clearly enjoyed.

Der Teufel had been performed countless times before the War and even though ten years had elapsed since those times, it is very probable that those people who witnessed performances of the earlier version would

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1. Ibid., p. 155 et seq.

2. Ibid., p. 158.

remember the spectacle quite clearly. There were several reasons to support such a proposition. For example, there were the outstanding scenes of comedy, quite unlike the stock interludes that audiences were used to seeing, but added to this was the excitement generated by the pamphlet war and the spectacle of the gentlemen of Letters joining battle in the courts.<sup>1</sup> In the light of these circumstances, it was only to be expected that audiences in Leipzig, after a span of only ten years, would remember the humour of Weisse's dialogue. If this was the case, then they would certainly remember Standfuss's music. Therefore, the better to repeat the scale of their former success, Weisse chose not to sacrifice box office appeal for any aesthetic niceties of form demanded by the critics. The question of whether or not scenes of magic affected public taste were luxuries the theatres could ill afford to indulge.

The English version had already proved its worth, besides which Sedaine had excluded some of the scenes which had most appealed to German audiences: the domestic quarrel between Jobsen and Lene and the loyal toast to the royal family. Thus, Weisse's task was by no means as simple and straightforward as it seems to the casual observer.

For example, in Leipzig there seems to have been little sympathy for the growing republican cause of the French, even though the people of Saxony had recently experienced seven long years of war.<sup>2</sup> Within a few weeks of hostilities commencing, they had witnessed heart-rending scenes when their wounded were carried into the city following the battle of Rossbach, fought near Leipzig on the 5th November 1757, while only three years later they heard the depressing news that the Prussians had laid siege to the city of Dresden, some fifty miles to the south-east. The city suffered a devastating bombardment during June 1760.<sup>3</sup> Many of those who survived lost their possessions and even their homes; but in

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1. See above, pp. 80-1.

2. See above, p. 5.

3. Weisse, Selbstbiographie (Liepzig, 1806), p. 43.

spite of these events, the people remained loyal to the Elector.

The cost of the War had been heavy enough in human terms, and though the peace brought relief, it brought in its wake a period of stringent economy to make good the ravages of the War. At the court in Dresden, for example, the Elector's economies included discontinuing the court patronage of the Italian opera seria, a measure which brought much hardship to the musical community there.

When Koch returned to Leipzig in 1765 the war had been over for a little over two years, and with memories of these events beginning to recede from public memory, the times were ripe to stage pieces that would bring a little pre-war sparkle back into the lives of the citizens. Le diable à quatre, with its cavalcade of songs and dances interspersed with a minimum of dialogue, might have sounded precisely the kind of entertainment that was required, but German playwrights had learned that they could ill afford to fly in the face of fortune: Frederick Schöne-mann in Berlin, the Neubers and Koch in Leipzig and, of course, Weisse himself, were thoroughly schooled in the harsh commercial realities of the theatre world, and knew well enough that the public would pay to see only those entertainments they found amusing. These usually included the interludes.

At that time it seemed that the public craze for the Italian interludes still held out the best prospect for success. Koch, Weisse and Standfuss had already attracted large audiences by the relatively simple expedient of adapting Coffey's farce for the German stage, and grafting onto it the musical style of the interludes. In effect this raised the status of a popular genre from the level of a slapstick farce, equally at home in the fairground booth, into a comic piece that demanded the trappings of the theatre. Sedaine's version of the same piece, as it stood, was not so ideally suited for this purpose, though it was a valuable source of new ideas.

Le diable à quatre, as mentioned already, contained seventy-eight musical numbers. With so many songs to perform there was little room for dialogue, and such as there was served only to link together the songs. Weisse retained a balance more in keeping with his own earlier one-act version. So that, according to Hiller's piano edition, there were only thirty-seven numbers spread over the three acts: a ratio closer to the sixteen numbers given out by Coffey in his one-act English edition.<sup>1</sup>

As to the question of plot, Weisse settled this issue by borrowing those episodes from Le diable à quatre that best suited his purpose. In this way, he adapted Margot's snuff scene, the marquise's brandy scene, which he inserted into the second act, and Sedaine's finale. Thus the French influence, taken at face value, seems extensive. The source of these ideas is beyond question. The central issue, however, is to determine the manner in which Weisse adapted the material which he 'borrowed', and this presents a rather different picture.

Examination of Weisse's text reveals much that is of interest, not least the alterations he made to the list of characters. Sedaine had avoided naming his characters in the English manner.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, Weisse was of a different opinion, and while his revised plot reflected a pre-occupation with matters of form, this did not lead to any changes in the characters, nor are there any grounds to suppose that had this been Weisse's first attempt at the play his decision would have been different.

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1. Hiller, Die verwandelten Weiber (Keyboard Edn) (Leipzig, 1770).

2. Sedaine gave his characters names in keeping with contemporary French society and the realism demanded by the times. To this end he renamed Coffey's characters according to the following scheme:

Sir John Loverule	- Le marquis
Lady Loverule	- La marquise
Jobson	- Jacques
Nell	- Margot
Doctor	- Un magicien - Docteur Zambalamuc
A blind fiddler	- Père Ambroise, un aveugle, jouant de vielle.



When he wrote his highly successful comedy, Die Poeten nach der Mode, in 1751, he took as his subject the literary controversy that raged between Gottsched and the Swiss, Bodmer. By creating a wealthy merchant married to a woman who gainsays his every word and action, Weisse was able to expose some of the pretensions of the literary world. To this end the names he chose for his characters were revealing:<sup>1</sup>

Herr Schwindel, ein reicher Kaufman  
 Frau Schwindelinn  
 Henriette [daughter to the Schwindels]  
 Herr Palmer, Reuthesekretair  
 Dunkel     )  
 Reimreich) [poets]

Schwindel becomes the patron of Reimreich - a disciple of Gottsched. Frau Schwindel, not to be outdone, offers a place to Dunkel. The two poets then compete for the hand of Henriette, their daughter. Weisse's use of emblematic characters and the form of the play much resemble the general character of English comedy. Weisse uses his characters both to symbolise contemporary attitudes and to expose the hypocrisy of the literary factions. The play, in turn, suffers from the tendency for the characters becoming reduced merely to cyphers, and the wisdom of the servants proves greater than that of their employers.

In the light of these facts it seems doubtful to suppose that Weisse, faced with the same problem in dealing with the characterisation of Der Teufel, would have given them entirely new names, nor do his actions indicate the blind continuation of a precedent set by the original translator of the piece, Caspar von Borcke.

Since von Borcke's text is now lost, it is impossible to know whether he translated Coffey's text in the form of rhyming couplets, as he had done with Julius Caesar, or whether he left the dialogue in natural speech. The character list, however, appeared on a handbill in Hamburg on Thursday the 29th June 1747:<sup>2</sup>

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1. Weisse, Die Poeten nach der Mode (Leipzig, 1783), p. 2.
  2. Devrient, Die Schönmänn'sche Truppe (Hamburg, 1894), p. 15.

"The Devil to Pay, or the Metamorphosed Wives"

Der Teufel ist los, oder Die verwandelten Weiber

Personen:

Herr Hans von Liebreich, ein gutiger und Gastfreyer Edelmann

Frau von Liebreich, dessen zänkische und böse Frau

Jobst, ein Schuflicker und Meistersinger in Junker Hansens Dorfe

Grete, seiner Frau

Ein Doctor, der die schwartze Kunst versteht

Der Kellermeister/Der Kammerdiener)  
Der Koch/Der Kutcher ) Herr von Liebreich's Gesinde

Ein blinder Spielmann

This is almost a literal translation of Coffey's original cast list:<sup>1</sup>

The Devil to Pay or the Wives metamorphos'd

Dramatis Personae:

Men

Sir John Loverule, an honest Country Gentleman,  
belov'd for his Hospitality

Butler/Cook/Footman)  
Coachman ) Servants to Sir John

Jobson, A Psalm-singing Cocker, tenant to  
Sir John

Doctor

Women

Lady Loverule, Wife to Sir John, a proud, canting  
brawling, fanatical Shrew

Lucy )  
Lettice) Her Maids

Nell, Jobson's Wife, an innocent Country-Girl

Tenants. Servants.

It is clear from this that Weisse returned von Borcke's Jobst and Grete to something closer to the original by renaming them Jobsen and Lene, viz. an equivalent German diminutive of Helen. From this, it would

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1. Coffey, The Devil to Pay (London, 1731), p. 1, Dramatis Personae.

seem that Weisse was concerned to maintain a measure of authenticity. Sedaine, entirely free of these constraints, constructed his character list with the sole intention of creating characters that would seem natural and credible to his critics, and not in obedience to a play form that was, in any case, alien to him. Given that Weisse was already sympathetic to the whole question of emblematic characterisation, a fact already demonstrated in his comedy Die Poeten nach der Mode, it is not surprising to find that he clung to the original names for the main characters in his revised version of Der Teufel. Nevertheless, he borrowed one idea from Sedaine. Coffey had left two characters without names: the Doctor and the blind fiddler. In Weisse's expanded version, the fiddler became Andreas, which compares with Sedaine's Père Ambroise and, therefore, may well have been suggested by Sedaine's Le diable à quatre. Naming the doctor Mikroskop is more in keeping with the English style of characterisation, and is also a change apparently inspired by Sedaine's version of the play. The names of all the principal characters, Liebreich, Jobsen and Lene, seemingly date from Koch's 1752 version. Thus, Weisse's final cast list was completed in the following way:<sup>1</sup>

Die verwandelten Weiber oder Der Teufel ist los

Personen:

Herr von Liebreich, ein Landedelmann  
 Frau von Liebreich, dessen Gemalinn  
 Jobsen Zeckel, ein Schuhflicker  
 Lene, dessen Frau  
 Mikroskop, ein Zauberer  
 Kellner/Koch            )  
 Kutcher/Bedienter) des Herrn von Liebreich  
 Hannchen) Mädchen der Frau von Liebreich  
 Lieschen)  
 Andreas, ein blinder Musikante  
     Verschiedene Bediente, Unterthanen und  
     Nachbarn des Herrn von Liebreich  
 Etliche Geiste

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1. Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), p. 2, Personen.

L. Der Teufel ist los, three-act version (1766): synopsis

Act One

Lene pleads with Jobsen to keep her company at home for once, instead of carousing with his friends in the tavern. He informs her, however, that he is invited to a party in Junker Liebreich's cellar. At this Lene pleads to go with him, but Jobsen refuses fearing for her virtue among such a low company, and when she insists loses patience with her (Das allerbeste Weib bleibt doch des Mannes ärgste Plage). Hurt by his refusal, Lene bemoans the fate of women (Immer Bier und Brandtewein). Somewhat mollified, Jobsen gives her six pfennigs to buy apples, plums and brandy and leaves to go to the party. Left alone, Lene decides to follow a little later, to go to the party on a pretext (Ohne Rüh' ist selten Brod).

Meanwhile, in Liebreich's cellar the servants, having prepared a huge bowl of punch, await the arrival of their guests. As they wait they voice their grievances stemming from working for such a bad-tempered employer as Frau Liebreich, Liebreich's second wife (Lieschen: Ist das ein schön Gesicht, das oft die Wuth entsetlet. Koch: O dürft ich nur. Kellner: Erst legt' ich sie untern Hahn. Hannchen: Kriegt man selten einen Mann).

They are interrupted by the arrival of Jobsen at the head of a throng of neighbours and fellow-tenants with Andreas, the blind fiddler, in their midst. The Kellner bids them all welcome, upon which they form up and carry in the huge bowl of punch in a grand and solemn procession (March with a carillon of glasses). Jobsen then leads the festivities with a rousing drinking song (Auf! holder Bacchus kron die Nacht mit deinen Fröhlichkeiten! Dies Glas gilt unsers Königs Heyl). A knock is heard outside, and Lene appears. Jobsen, annoyed at this interruption, orders her back home, but the servants prevail upon him to let her stay (Lene singe du!) and she obliges them with a song (Ohne Lieb' und ohne

Wein was war unser Leben). Then the dancing and merrymaking begin in earnest.

The festive atmosphere is shattered, however, by the unexpected return of Frau Liebreich accompanied by her husband. The sight of her servants making free with her house drives her into an uncontrollable rage. With a great cry she strikes out at those nearest to her, and seizing the fiddle breaks it over the blind man's head, leaving her husband to compensate the man for his loss. Liebreich tries in vain to calm her down. She catches sight of Jobsen, who pauses in his flight to give her a piece of his mind (Das allerbeste Weib bleibt doch des Mannes ärgste Plage). As the last of the guests leave, Doktor Mikroskop, a magician, arrives at the house in search of a night's shelter, but Frau Liebreich turns him away (Immer, geschenkt und immer gegeben). Liebreich regretfully directs the man to the cobbler's cottage and gives vent to his feelings (Gewährt mir, Ihr Götter, das einz'ge Begehren).

Lene arrives at her cottage to find no trace of Jobsen, and seizes the opportunity to try a forbidden pleasure: a pinch of snuff (Verbietet nur etwas der Frau, ihr guten Herrn!). Just then, the magician arrives. Lene makes him welcome and, touched by her simple hospitality, he tells her fortune. Reading her face, he foresees a change in her circumstances. Warning her to be confident, he tells of a coming life of luxury. Lene is overjoyed at his news (Mein schwellend Herz hüpf't mir vor Freude). They are interrupted by the return of Jobsen who, fearing cuckoldry, drives the magician away with his strap.

## Act Two

Outside in the darkness, with a plan for revenge already formed in his mind, Doctor Mikroskop summons his assistants, Nabishog and Nadir, (Auf naht euch, ihr dienstbaren Geiste herzu). He commands them to convey Lene into Frau Liebreich's bed and carry Frau Liebreich to the cobbler's cottage, transforming the two women so that no-one will recognise

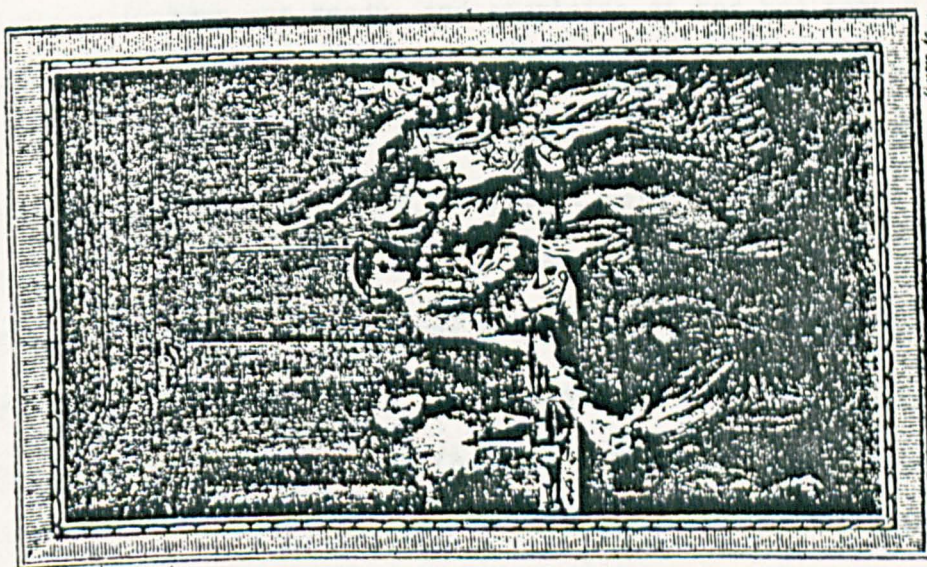
Die  
verwandelten Weiber  
oder  
Der Teufel ist los.

Eine

fomische Oper in drey Aufzügen.

2

Sechster Theil.



Die verwandelten Weiber Act I. Sc. VII.

Weisse, Der Teufel ist los (Leipzig, 1777). Frontispiece and title page.

them. The spirits and their furies leave to carry out their master's bidding amid a terrifying thunderstorm.

Morning finds Jobsen asleep on the floor. Puzzled by this, he blows up the fire, lights his lamp and sets to work cobbling shoes (Unter allen Handwerken von Osten bis Westen). Frau Liebreich, still in bed and disturbed by the unaccustomed noise, answers him and begins to shout for her servants. Jobsen, believing her to be bewitched by the magician, carries on working (Es war einmal ein junges Weib). Frau Liebrich, fearing that she has been kidnapped, humours Jobsen, but the sound of a hunting horn brings hope of rescue and she cries for help. At this, Jobsen loses his temper and with the aid of his strap forces her to spin thread. Satisfied that he has re-established his authority, he resumes work (Lasst die Grossen immerhin sich mit Staatsgeschäften plagen).

Just then, Lieschen, Frau Liebreich's maid, arrives to see whether her mistress's shoes are ready, and complains of her bad temper (Wo sie ist, ist der Teufel los). Frau Liebreich, overhearing this insult, boxes her servant's ears. At this, Jobsen forces her onto her knees (Nieder! Nieder! auf die Knie!) and bids her repeat word for word a suitably worded apology. Upon this, Lieschen departs.

With daylight now broken, they settle down to work once more, and Jobsen serenades his wife with a suitable morning song (Um Kirchturm schwatzen schon die Dohlen). With peace established, he asks Frau Liebreich to fetch his brandy bottle, but she fetches a jug of water instead. Then, emptying it over his head, she takes to her heels and runs out of the cottage.

Meanwhile Lene, surrounded by the luxurious drapery of Frau Liebreich's boudoir, believes herself to be in heaven (Das ist der Himmel sicherlich). She discovers the novel sensation of earrings and, catching sight of herself in the mirror, is astounded to find instead of her own reflection that of Frau Liebreich, but at that moment the servants

approach and, fearing discovery, she takes refuge in the bed.

In turn the maids, the cook, the butler and coachman are delighted at the mysterious change that has come over their mistress and they rush to tell their master the good news, leaving Lene to muse over her changed circumstances (O seht doch Jobsen Zeckels Weib!). While she is alone, Lene recalls the magician's instruction to remain confident (Mädchen in der grossen Welt, glicken sie auch selbst den Affen). Her reverie is broken by the arrival of Liebreich. They find themselves overwhelmed and soon fall in love (Was gleichet, schönster Engel dir (Duet)).

### Act Three

Frau Liebreich, seeking to find someone who will recognise her, arrives at the house loudly demanding to be let into her own house. The ensuing commotion brings Liebreich and Lene to the scene. The two women are overcome when they confront one another. As they agonise over their predicament, Jobsen arrives to take his 'wife' back home. As he leaves with Frau Liebreich, who is now on the point of collapse, the magician arrives and reveals the secret of his revenge to Liebreich.

At this, they recall Jobsen and Frau Liebreich back into the house where, with the spell now broken, Frau Liebreich is restored to her husband, and promises henceforth to obey her husband. On hearing this, Jobsen makes an observation on wives (Ein Weib das munter, jung und flink ist). Liebreich, overjoyed at his good fortune, sends for the musicians while Lene, still bemused at this unexpected turn of events, wonders what is happening (Mir ist - ich weiss nicht wie?).

Jobsen, troubled by the question of fidelity, is assured by Liebreich that nothing more than a harmless kiss has passed between himself and Lene (Was ich nicht weiss, macht mich nicht heiss), but Jobsen still cannot believe that the fine lady he sees is really Lene (Kleide machen Leute). With this, Liebreich insists that Lene keeps the clothes as a token. Lene shows them off (Ob mir die schönen Kleider stehn? Das ist nicht die Frage). Frau Liebreich asks her husband for his purse and



compensates Jobsen for the blows she has given him. Jobsen is delighted by the money (Heya, heh, nun hab'ich Geld) and declares that he will in future be less spendthrift.

At that moment they are overwhelmed by the arrival of the neighbours and the servants, bringing with them the blind fiddler, Andreas. The company sing in celebration (Wenn ein Frau das Joch zerbricht). Andreas then demands a drink. The butler pours him a glass of punch. Herr and Frau Liebreich then withdraw, leaving the company to enjoy their celebrations in peace. With this, they ask Andreas to accompany them on his fiddle, but he refuses to play without another drink. Laughing, they begin their song, obliging him to play for them in any case, ignoring his repeated request at the end of each verse of their song (Der Teufel ist ein böser Mann) and the play ends amid scenes of revelry and dancing.

#### M. Weisse's handling of the plot

The foregoing synopsis reveals a considerable degree of agreement between Coffey's afterpiece and Weisse's expanded version of Der Teufel. It also reveals the extent to which Weisse disregarded the work of Sedaine. Closer examination of the dialogue shows that the first twelve speeches of The Devil to Pay are to be found among the first fourteen speeches of Weisse's final text, culminating in the words of Jobsen's first song (The best of wives). Comparison of the first three speeches from the text of Der Teufel:<sup>1</sup>

- Lene: Ich bitte dich, liebster Jobsen, bleib' immer diesen Abend bey mir, und mache dich einmal zu Hause lustig!
- Jobsen: Halt's Maul, Frau, und spinne! denn fehlt mir's an Draht, so soll dir's übel bekommen.
- Lene: Ach ja, das weiss ich wohl! Wenn du in die Schenke lauf, das deinige verthust und voll, wie ein Sack wieder heim kommst, so bist du kein Mensch, und haltst auch andre nicht dafür.

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1. Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), p. 3.

with the first three speeches from Coffey's text reveals just how much agreement exists between the two:<sup>1</sup>

Nell: Pr'ythee, good Jobson, stay with me To-night,  
and for once make merry at home.

Jobson: Peace, peace, you Jade, and go Spin; for if  
I lack any thread for my Stitching, I will  
punish you by virtue of my Sovereign  
Authority.

Nell: Ay marry, no doubt of that; whilst you take  
your Swig at the Alehouse, spend your sub-  
stance, get drunk as a Beast, then come  
home like a Sot, and use one like a Dog.

Moreover, closer comparison of the two texts only serves to disclose the continuing similarity between the two. Apart from the foreword, Coffey's text contains sixteen songs and two hundred and seventy-nine speeches. No less than two hundred and thirteen of these can be identified within Weisse's text. In addition, Weisse revised and rewrote other parts of Coffey's text, the better to serve the needs of his own adaptation.

Altogether eighty-two of Coffey's speeches are to be found in Weisse's first act, eighty-four in act two, and a further forty-seven occur in the third and final act. As a consequence of using so much of Coffey's English dialogue Weisse kept Coffey's original story line. In spite of this fact, he made some use of Sedaine's material to be found in Le diable à quatre.

Clearly, making changes to a play already so familiar to the public seems to have carried so many risks that Weisse avoided such a course of action altogether. Instead, he made use of his own existing material which remained from 1752 and simply developed some of the situations, either to enhance the comic effect or to give extra definition to the characters..

It is also clear from the play that Weisse had access to a copy of

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1. Coffey, The Devil to Pay (London, 1731), p. 1.

Le diable à quatre, and that he took advantage of this opportunity, like Sedaine before him, to correct some of the weaknesses contained in the English play by using material borrowed from the French version. However, he was also careful to avoid inconsistencies in Sedaine's work, possibly the result of Sedaine's need to follow French conventions. For example, Sedaine's play opens not in the cobbler's cottage but in the château where the servants are gathered and in a series of vaudevilles complain of their mistress's cruelty. This leads to the cobbler imposing his will on the piece in the first instance in the words of a vaudeville tune (Jardinier ne vois-tu pas):<sup>1</sup>

Le Cuisinier: Demandez à maitre Jacques.

Maitre Jacques: De quoi s'agit-il?

Marton: Quand une femme...

Lucile: Comme notre maîtresse...

Le Cuisinier: Laissez-moi dire.

Air: Jardinier, ne vois-tu pas?

Quand votre femme en courroux  
Aupres de vous s'échappe,  
Compere, que faites-vous?

Maitre Jacques: Moi, d'abord, crainte des coups,  
Je frappe, je frappe, je frappe.

Ecoutez-moi.

Ariette

Je veux qu'on me révere,  
Et ne connois chez moi  
Que ma loi.  
Quand un regard sévere  
Annonce ma colere  
Ma femme se tient coi,  
Tremble à part soi,  
Songe à se taire  
Et meurt d'effroi.

This could be presented effectively enough on stage, but not with the same dramatic impact with which the English version emphasised this

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1. Sedaine, Le diable à quatre (Paris, 1830), pp. 138-9.

vital part of the play as, for example, when Nell asks Jobson to take her to the party:<sup>1</sup>

Nell: I'm sure they wou'd make me welcome; you promis'd I shou'd see the House, and the Family has not been here before, since you marry'd and brought me home.

Jobson: Thou most audacious Strumpet, dar'st thou dispute with me, thy Lord and Master? get in and spin, or else my Strap shall wind about thy Ribs most confoundedly.

Air 1. The Twitcher

He that has the best Wife  
She's the plague of his life  
But for her that will scold and will quarrel,  
Let him cut her off short  
Of her Meat and her Sport,  
And ten times a day hoop her Barrel, brave Boys,  
And ten times a day hoop her Barrel.

Weisse seems to have preferred the English version for no better reason than that the whole scene establishes Jobson in his authoritarian role, the better to carry out his role of 'correction' when later he is confronted by the termagent Lady Loverule in the second act.

In other respects, however, Weisse seems to have been content to borrow episodes from Sedaine, to expand his own play. This had the advantage of allowing him to add to his characterisation. Thus, Lene takes her pinch of snuff; Leischen calls at the cobbler's cottage to collect her mistress's shoes - and for her pains receives a box on the ears; and much of Frau Liebreich's material in the second act is based on interpolations from Le diable à quatre; but Weisse uses this material alongside appropriate material from The Devil to Pay.

One episode retained from Coffey's piece particularly stands out in Weisse's handling of the play. The procession in which Jobsen carries the bowl of punch was handled with great style:<sup>2</sup>

The cook leads the way with a lantern. He is followed by Andreas. Jobsen carries a huge bowl

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1. Coffey, The Devil to Pay (London, 1731), p. 2.

2. Minor, Lessings Jugend Freunde (Berlin, 1882-99), 164 Bde. Sec 72, p. 79.

of punch, flanked on either side by the Butler and his footman who each carry jugs and napkins. The rest follow in pairs clinking their glasses in order to make a carillon.

Koch also took the opportunity to lampoon his old enemy - Gottsched. During the transformation scene a host of furies appeared with reddened faces, wearing red stockings and red gloves and bearing plumes on their heads.<sup>1</sup>

Although Weisse never translated songs literally, he adapted stanzas from both The Devil to Pay and Le diable à quatre. Where songs were borrowed, Weisse translated them mostly in the form of single stanzas comprising six or eight lines, avoiding the tedium of constructing verses to match the existing rhythms of their tunes. In this way nearly all of Coffey's songs - twelve out of the original sixteen - found their way even into the expanded version of Der Teufel, whereas only six of Sedaine's songs were employed in the piece. However, Weisse introduced two elements of musical style which were taken from the opéras comiques.

In the scene where the servants sit and bemoan their fate at working for such a cruel mistress they each deliver a song. Weisse treated their sequence of songs as a miniature vaudeville. For at this point in the play only a line or two of dialogue separates each of the songs delivered by Lieschen, the Cook, the Butler and Hannchen, Frau Liebreich's second maid.<sup>2</sup>

The finale comprises two rondos. In each of these the characters deliver a verse, pointing up a moral deriving from the foregoing action in the play. It seems clear that the audience were encouraged to join in the choruses.

Identification of the various sources of Weisse's material gives some

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1. These were the innumerable supporters whose pens were always so busy on Gottsched's endeavours. In addition, Minor reports that the Doctor was dressed in formal dress with a state wig - a reference to Gottsched's efforts to reform stage costumes.

2. Thus the style of presentation closely resembles that employed in the vaudevilles, especially in Le diable à quatre.

idea of the kind of balance he sought to strike between the different styles of drama he brought together. From the four hundred and sixty-three speeches in Der Teufel,<sup>1</sup> hundred and thirteen were taken from The Devil to Pay, whereas only seventy are taken from Le diable à quatre. A similar pattern emerges from a comparison of the songs. Expressed as percentages, these figures present a more accurate appraisal of the sources used by Weisse:

Sources:	Coffey	Sedaine	Weisse
Dialogue:	(213) 46%	(70) 15%	(180) 39%
Songs:	(12) 34%	(6) 17%	(17) 48%

### The characters

Comparison of the three texts immediately reveals the different ways in which The Devil to Pay was adapted to meet local needs in Leipzig, Paris and, indeed, in Vienna. Examined in sequence, however, the texts reveal changes of emphasis in terms of the play's characters. In this respect, Weisse reveals through his choice of material a deliberate re-appraisal of the characters and the contribution they make to the drama, clothing them with personalities more consistent with their function in the play: a course of action already implicit in some of Sedaine's modifications.

Weisse, however, avoided the obvious inconsistencies the French playwright had created in his treatment of the cobbler. Instead, by opening the play with the scene in the cobbler's cottage, Weisse established Jobsen in his role as master of the house in the first scene:<sup>1</sup>

Lene: Ich bitte dich, lieber Jobsen, bleib' immer diesen Abend bey mir, und mache dich einmal zu Hause lustig!

Jobsen: Halt's Maul, Frau, und spinne! denn fehlt mir's an Draht, so soll dir's übel bekommen.

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1. Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), p. 3.

Lene: Ach ja, das weiss ich wohl! Wenn du in die Schenke läufst, das deinige verthust, und voll, wie ein Sack heim kommst, so bist du kein Mensch, und hältst auch andre nicht dafür.

Jobsen: Wie? willst du raisonnieren, Rabenaas? - Weissst du wohl, dass ich König und Herr in meinem Hause bin?

But this left Jobsen rather unconvincing as a husband. Presumably, Lene had married a man capable of companionship. Weisse corrected this omission, balancing the domineering side of Jobsen's character with a touch of sentiment:<sup>1</sup>

Jobsen: ... Du musst wissen, dass der grosse Morgel ein ganzes Regiment von Weibern hat, und ich bin mehr, als zehn grosse Morgels: denn er ist doch nichts weiter, als ein blinder Heide, der in die Hölle kommt.

Lene: Ich möchte auch wissen, was er mit fünfzig Weibern anfangen wollte?

Jobsen: Was, was, du Narrinn? Sie schreyen ihm die Ohren voll, und er klopfet sie der Reihe nach durch.

Lene: Pfuy, Zeckel! Ich möchte keinen grossen Morgel zum Manne haben; und wenn ich fünfzig Männer haben könnte, so würdest du mir doch immer der liebster seyn.

Jobsen: Nun, das ist brav, Lene. Ich versprache dir, ich will kein grosser Morgel werden. Du verdienst, das ich grossmuthig dich bin: da, Lene, hast du sechs Pfennige: thue du was zu gute, weil ich nicht zu Hause bin.

So that when Jobsen goes to the party, which precipitates Frau Liebreich's stormy scene, he is already full established in the role he will act out after the transformation scene as the man who can, and does, correct Frau Liebreich's selfishness and bad temper.

In fact, after the transformation Jobsen continues to behave towards his 'wife' in the same authoritative manner. So that when Frau Liebreich

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1. Ibid., p. 7.

refuses to spin the result is almost predictable:<sup>1</sup>

Jobsen: Nein; traum ich oder wach' ich? - In meinem Leben habe ich noch kein böses Wort von ihr gehört; und auf Einmal === komm, Knieressin! zeige was dein mächtiger Kitzel vermag. - Warte, Nickel, du sollst mir bald nüchtern werden.

(Er schlägt sie.)

Sedaine had made a most valuable contribution to the character of the cobbler's wife. Instead of the cypher she had been in The Devil to Pay, she became more convincing in her role as a woman: mischievous enough to try a pinch of snuff with her husband safely out of the way, and independent enough to go to the party at the château. Sedaine apparently avoided creating a character so timid that she was expected to behave completely out of character after her transformation. Weisse noted this and carefully added to her character in a way which further enhanced her role as a woman and also as mistress of Liebreich's household. .

In the first place, Weisse established in her all those qualities absent from Frau Liebreich's character: the obedient wife, a mischievous sense of adventure, and the confidence to act on her own behalf. Weisse achieved these aims notably by adapting appropriate material from Le diable à quatre but also by adding new material of his own.

When Lene arrives at the party Jobsen is most annoyed - he had expressly forbidden her to go - but the servants clamour for her to stay and Weisse inserts enough material to demonstrate an important point: that she is already a popular figure in the village:<sup>2</sup>

Lene: Heya! heya! -

Jobsen: Zum Henker, was für eine Heyastimme stört uns in unserer Lustigkeit?

Kellner: Hey, herein!

Alle: Je, Lenschen? willkommen! willkommen! - tausendmal! -

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1. Ibid., p. 49.

2. Ibid., p. 19.



Each of these different facets of Lene's personality contributes to the events which subsequently befall her. Transformed into Liebreich's wife, she is the perfect wife. Her charm wins the heart of Liebreich and the affection of her servants, and though she is in a daunting position it has already been established that she has enough self-possession to carry off her new role. Furthermore, when at the end of the play she resumes the role of Jobsen's wife, she does not have to return to being the meek woman demanded by Coffey in The Devil to Pay.

Of all the characters, Liebreich was the most difficult to deal with. He is clearly the most unfortunate of men: the henpecked husband, and remains so in each version of the piece. It is left to the supernatural element in the play to resolve the situation in which he finds himself. Perhaps, wisely, Weisse clung to the situation as it was originally presented. To this end, Liebreich is consistently represented as the justice-figure: the man who compensates Andreas for the loss of his fiddle, apologising to the magician for his wife's lack of gentility. Liebreich's problems are resolved by the intervention of the magician.

Yet, Weisse introduced one interesting change in his text. At the end of the play, when the two women keep their clothes, Weisse departed from the English text. Instead of Frau Liebreich, it is Leibreich, the dispenser of justice, who makes a present to Lene of her fine clothes:<sup>1</sup>

Liebreich: Nein, mein gute Frau. Ich weiss, meine  
Gemalinn willigt drein, dass Ihre sie  
zum Andenken dieser Begebenheit behaltet.

Lady: No, thou shalt keep them, and I'll pre-  
serve thine [Nell's] as Reliques.

#### Invective and decency

Laughter is universal to mankind; yet the fact is that comedy which exists to provoke laughter can offend sensibilities to the extent that actually generates anger.

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1. Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), p. 53: Coffey, The Devil to Pay (London, 1731), p. 30.

There exist many types of comedy. Some depend on the skills of the players as in the art of mime; or there is the kind of comedy which demands of its actors the ability to ad lib. with audiences; besides these, there is the comedy of the playhouse where the lines of the actors are pre-determined by the playwright.

The existence of this tradition is in itself misleading since so many examples belong not to England but derive from the classical theatre of Greece and Rome. For example, Bottom in Shakespeare's Midsummer Night's Dream bears more than a passing resemblance to Dametas, the comic figure in Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia. Yet even Shakespeare's literary style drew upon a more homespun tradition, something closer to the animal nature in man. The tragedies often contained a comic episode to relieve the tension of the drama before the final act is played. Many of these interludes contain characters drawn from low life, as in the porter's scene in Macbeth.<sup>1</sup> Yet even these characters bear little resemblance to the comic characters created by Jonson during the same period; and though his characters are developed from the city dramas of the Middle Ages, they signal a new development in comedy. These were the characters of Jonson's reformed comedy: the satire.

The dialogue which Weisse preserved so faithfully in his translation of Coffey's afterpiece belonged to the new tradition, and survived from the first version of the comedy written in 1685-6. Jevon wrote his original comedy, The Devil of a Wife, in the form of a low, comic farce, and its express purpose was to ridicule the Puritans, after the example of Ben Jonson. The play was in fact a satire.

Coffey's afterpiece preserved two of Jevon's original comic characters, the cobbler and the high-born Lady, each the proud rulers of their respective domains, readily provoked to rage:<sup>2</sup>

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1. Shakespeare (ed. P. Alexander) The Complete Works (London, 1959), p. 999, "Macbeth".

2. Coffey, The Devil to Pay (London, 1731), p. 2.

Jobson: Don't you know, Hussy, that I am King in my own House, and that this is Treason against my Majesty.

and later:<sup>1</sup>

Lady: Do you call my Authority in Question, ungrateful Man. Look to your Dogs and Horses abroad, but it shall be my Province to Govern here.

Having invented such characters, it seems to follow quite naturally that they should treat the objects of their anger to vivid streams of invective.

Lady Loverule's tirade against the party guests and her servants was undeniably funny. These imprecations, however, were not universally lauded either in England or abroad. When the piece was adapted for audiences in Germany and in France, the problem was that Lady Loverule's bad temper, and in particular her tirade, leads directly to the transformation which then provides the springboard for much of the ensuing action:<sup>2</sup>

Lady: Ye filthy scoundrels, and odious Jades, I'll teach you to junket thus, and steal my Provisions; I shall be devour'd at this Rate.

Butler: I thought, Madam, we might be Merry once upon a Holiday.

Lady: You Popish cur! is one Day more Holy than another? and if it be, you'll be sure to get drunk upon it, you Rogue. [Beats him] You Minx, you impudent Flirt, are you jiging it after an abominable Fiddle? all Dancing is whorish, Hussy. [Lugs her by the Ears]

In neither the French nor the German version was this dialogue entirely acceptable, but it could not be ignored since the transformation and all the ensuing action turned upon this single scene. Weisse, writing in Germany in 1752, had run the gauntlet of Gottsched's fierce criticism

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1. Ibid., p. 4.

2. See Jevons "Letter to those who frequent Locket's Ordinary", The Devil of a Wife (London, 1686), p. 1. See also Coffey, The Devil to Pay (London, 1731), p. 6.

already: Sedaine, writing for a bourgeois audience growing more and more refined, shed much of the invective altogether. In the light of these circumstances it is interesting to note that Weisse employed so much of the original dialogue in his expanded version of 1766; for although he omitted the worst of the bad language, enough remained to offend the more delicate literary sensibilities of the day, especially those who claimed that Weisse had already debased the German drama:<sup>1</sup>

Edelfrau: ... [zu ihren Leuten] Ihr lüderlichen  
Schurken und unverschämten Menscher! Ich  
will euch lernen Leckerbischen fressen  
und mich bestehlen!

Kellner: Ich dachte, gnädige Frau, weil Sie Heute  
nicht zu Hause wären; dass wir uns auch  
einmal einen guten Tag machen dürften.

Edelfrau: Einen guten Tag, Schlingel? einen guten  
Tag auf deinen Kopf! - [Sie reisst ihm  
die Mütze aus der Hand, und schlägt ihn  
damit.]=== Und du, Mutz, [zu einer von den  
Mädchen] untersteht dich, nach einer  
lüderlichen Fiedel herum zu springen.

Thus, Weisse manages to preserve the spirit of the original though couched in rather less vivid language. From this it might seem that Weisse had cleaned up the text, which to some extent is true enough, but a single word is enough to excite criticism on such a delicate issue, and Weisse, who did not avoid translating lusty dialogue, ran into trouble with his critics.

The English version employed most of the derogatory terms applicable to the female sex: whore, drab, slut, strumpet, and more frequently jade or hussy. Weisse did not translate all of these, but employed the German term Rabenaas in several cases. In 1752-53 this had earned him the most severe rebuke from Gottsched on the grounds of decency during the days of the pamphlet war: a charge that Weisse was wise enough to ignore at the time. In similar circumstances Sedaine had used the French word

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1. Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), p. 24.

2. Minor, Ch. F. Weisse (Innsbruck, 1880), pp. 154-5.

coquine. However, this was not the only problem presented by the play.

In The Devil to Pay Jobson, fearing cuckoldry, had been the zealous guardian of his wife's virtue. This was the reason for his antagonism towards the magician and the question is raised for a second time when Nell is restored to him at the end of the play. In connection with this, Jevon had used a reference, common in old plays, to having horns planted on the head. Thus, when Jobson arrived back at the cottage to discover Nell in the company of the magician, Jobson's suspicions immediately come to the fore:<sup>1</sup>

Nell: O Husband! here's the rarest Man ... he  
has told me my Fortune.

Jobson: Has he so! and planted my Fortune too, a  
lusty pair of Horns upon my Head --- Eh!  
--- is't not so?

Weisse, confronted with this speech, simply translated the saying in-  
to German:<sup>2</sup>

Lene: O lieber Jobsen! es ist ein recht feiner  
Mann! Er hat mir wahrgesagt: o was für  
artige Dinge hat er mir gesagt.

Jobsen: Dir wahrgesagt, und mir vielleicht ein  
schönes paar Hörner auf den Kopf ge-  
pflanzet, heh?

Besides the question of cuckoldry there was the further question of both ladies appearing on stage in varying stages of undress, demanded by the dramatic context. Again this question had been the previous subject of much criticism during the pamphlet war in 1752-53. Quite clearly Weisse chose to repeat much of the material that had aroused the sensibilities of his critics in 1752 in a form if not exactly the same, then not in a very much altered form from that in which it had appeared already.

Weisse had already demonstrated his independence from both sides of the literary war between the Swiss and Gottsched in his play Die Poeten nach den Mode. His treatment of The Devil to Pay, incorporating as it

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1. Coffey, The Devil to Pay (London, 1731), p. 11. See also Jevon, The Devil of a Wife (London, 1686), p. 17.

2. Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), pp. 37-8.

did Sedaine's 'improvements', demonstrated the same independent spirit in his treatment of the plot, its characters and, above all, in his treatment of the invective and the so-called question of decency. He clearly saw the play for what it was: a harmless farce that used nothing that had not already been the subject of comedies since time immemorial.

#### N. Sensibility and realism

Both moral comedy and its derivative, the corrective-comedy, depend upon a portrayal of human weakness for much of their appeal. Thus the various misfortunes that man can bring upon himself as a result of greed and hypocrisy are found to figure prominently among the devices playwrights employed in their pieces. Added to this, conventions grew up within the play form that demanded the bringing together of disparate elements of human nature, the better to build tension and give pace to the unfolding action of these plays.

Coffey adapted Jevon's old farce as an afterpiece precisely so as to capitalise on these advantages. In doing so, however, he highlighted the formal stiffness of the characters. Built as they were out of so many opposing elements which sat uncomfortably together, the complexities originally resolved over the span of a full-length, three-act play were now to be resolved in the space of a single act. Thus, the play's opposing elements, innocence and experience; strength and weakness; good and evil, found within, and distributed amongst, the play's characters, offered a playwright with Weisse's experience plenty of scope to improve the action of the play; but it also provided him with a miniature yet complete village community.

Evidence contained within the play shows that Weisse took full advantage of this opportunity not only to redraw the characters, but also to break away from a conventional treatment of stock characters. In the earlier version of Der Teufel, Standfuss had given each character music appropriate to his role and status, but almost as if they belonged to the

commedia dell'arte. The characters of an English moral comedy were typical stock characters but had little in common with the near-pantomime style of Italian comedy. For these reasons, the dialogue Weisse put into the mouths of his characters carried implications far beyond the way in which these characters were intended to behave toward one another: for, by means of introducing suitable elements of vernacular speech into his dialogue, Weisse drew his characters with due regard for their station in life - as though they existed in real life. Thus, the characters in The Devil to Pay behave according to their status in the play, but their dialogue is quite another matter. It may well have been played with an appropriate country accent, but the dialogue given to Nell and Jobson is written with more regard for the rules of grammar than to portray the modes of country speech a girl like Nell might reasonably be expected to use: or, for that matter, a village cobbler:<sup>1</sup>

Nell: Pr'ythee, good Jobson, stay with me To-night, and for once make merry at home.

Jobson: Peace, peace, you Jade, and go Spin; for if I lack any thread for my Stitching, I will punish you by virtue of my Sovereign Authority.

Nor is there anything in Sedaine's Le diable à quatre to indicate any deviation from this idealised form of speech. However, Weisse cast these two opening speeches in a very different style:<sup>2</sup>

Lene: Ich bitte dich, liebster Jobsen, bleib immer diesen Abend bey mir, und mache dich einmal zu Hause lustig.

Jobsen: Halt's Maul, Frau, und spinne! Denn fehlt mir's an Draht, so soll es dir's übel bekommen.

Here, Weisse's use of "bleib" instead of "bleibe" indicates the use of colloquial speech, while Jobsen's retort, "halt's Maul!" descends to the vernacular. In addition, the use of colloquial forms of speech such as

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1. Coffey, The Devil to Pay (London, 1731), p. 1.

2. Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), p. 3.

"mir's" instead of "mir es" and "dir's" instead of "dir es" confirm Weisse in his intention. He employs a similar trick of speech to reflect the depth of Frau Liebreich's anger when she discovers her servants making free with her house and provisions:<sup>1</sup>

Edelfrau: Was giebt's in meinem Hause?

or Und ich seh' es gerne.

Herr von Liebreich's language, however, matches his composure, so that even when his wife is in the middle of her tirade his words (and presumably his manner) remain correct and even formal:<sup>2</sup>

Liebreich: Seyn Sie ruhig, meine Liebster! Ich  
sehe es gerne, ...

Thus, Weisse introduced new shades of realism into his dialogue so that his characters would speak on the stage as they might be expected to in real life: the noble characters are given more formality and correctness, the lower characters more comfortable, colloquial forms of speech. Besides this, of course, Weisse included a whole glossary of bad language translated from the English original. Thus, much of the vernacular speech is represented by the kind of imprecation given to the characters. Jobsen's favourite word is Rabenaas, closely followed by Nickel or Nickelchen. Frau Liebreich's vocabulary is far more comprehensive and it is written in a much more fluent style: Mutz, Nickel, Schlingel, Galgenschwengel, lüderlicher Schurke, verfluchter Kerl, rupfigter Schwarzer, and others. Jobsen's favourite oath is zum Henker, while Lene expresses her surprised disbelief at the magician's prophecies with an exclamation of "O Gemini"<sup>3</sup>

The use of devices of speech like these allows Weisse to establish at least the semblance of a community of country people without actually resorting to dialect. Although the use of a word like Maul instead of

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1. Ibid., p. 23.

2. Ibid.

3. Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), p. 35. See also this same expression in Coffey's The Devil to Pay (London, 1731), p. 10.



Mund need not be construed as the use of dialect, its common vulgar use has clear implications within the context of the play. The realism which Weisse strove to bring to his dialogue enabled him to bring a far more important improvement to his characters; after all, much of the dialogue must have remained unchanged from the 1752 version, it was the way in which the stage lives of the characters were expanded to include their inner thoughts and feelings that added the finishing touches to his work as a playwright. Weisse freely altered lines and inserted new material so as to allow his characters to respond more to one another. Thus, Jobsen's song, Das allerbeste Weib bleibt doch des Mannes ärgste Plage:<sup>1</sup>

Das allerbeste Weib bleibt doch  
Des Mannes ärgste Plage:  
Doch quält sie ihn mit Zank und Schrey'n;  
So häng' er ihr den Brodkorb hoch,  
Vergess auch nicht, mit jedem Tage  
Sie zehnmal, zehnmal durch zu bläu.

is answered immediately not with a single line of dialogue as it was in The Devil to Pay:<sup>2</sup>

Nell: Well, we poor Women must always be Slaves,  
and never have any Joy, but you Men run  
and ramble at your Pleasure.

but with a complete song, which gives Lene more time to convey her feelings at her own plight and she goes on to bewail the fate of women in general.<sup>3</sup>

Lene: Ja ja, wir armen Weibern sind immer die  
Sklavinnen der Männer.

Immer Bier, und Branntewein.  
Aber wir  
Sitzen hier,  
Dürfen uns niemals erfreuen:  
Und wenn wir darüber schrey'n;  
Weh uns armen Weiberlein!

The new songs were written around a single main idea and called for an appropriate musical setting to enhance the sense conveyed by the words. Previously, the songs had served only to extend the buffoonery of the

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1. Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), p. 5.
  2. Coffey, The Devil to Pay (London, 1731), p. 3.
  3. Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), p. 6.

interludes; now, it held out a real possibility of extending the characterisation. For with its special quality the music allowed each character a moment to dwell upon their aspirations, happiness or their circumstances, or simply add to the festive atmosphere of the piece. For these reasons, the stanzas that Weisse wrote had a direct influence upon the style of music that would be most suitable: it also directly influenced the final musical form of the Singspiel, which would serve as a model for others to imitate.

#### O. The text as a springboard for the music

Weisse's expansion of Der Teufel from a one-act afterpiece into a full-length three-act entertainment made a considerable difference to its impact on audiences, not least because of the many songs that he added. In addition to those numbers retained from the earlier 1752 production, he wrote no fewer than twenty-five new songs. Because of the increased length of the play, these were needed to maintain the balance between the music and dialogue in two additional acts. Some of the new songs, as already mentioned, were borrowed from Le diable à quatre, but most of them were original pieces. These were then placed beside the earlier songs taken from The Devil to Pay. Weisse reconciled differences in style simply enough in the process of translation. Ballad-opera and opéra comique, however, made different demands on music, and these differences presented him with new opportunities to combine the advantages of both entertainments in the new version of his Singspiel. One marked result of this process of imposing unity upon the music was Weisse's preference, regardless of the origin of the song, for single verse forms.

His original translation of Charles Coffey's piece contained not only its plot but also, as a matter of course, its songs. As a result, the music that Standfuss had composed for the 1752 production followed almost exactly the same plan as that created by Coffey in The Devil to Pay. Thus, the single verse forms that are to be found in the English

version, even though they were 'freely' translated by Weisse, were set as single verse songs in the 1752 version of Der Teufel. In terms of music, they underwent something of a metamorphosis. For Standfuss, the appropriate equivalent to a simple English tune was the Italian arietta, which also featured in many of the popular interludes staged between the acts of the tragedies. The ariettas were then at the height of their popularity. In this way the transcriptions of Coffey's songs, having proved their popularity with the public already, were then retained in the expanded version of 1766.

In addition to these single verse songs, nearly all of Coffey's strophic songs survived for the same reason. Surprisingly, perhaps, these not only survived in the same form, but also with the same number of verses so that, despite the changes in their musical presentation, they still resembled their original counterparts in The Devil to Pay given in London as far back as 1731.

One of the distinguishing features of Coffey's musical scheme was the ratio that occurred between these two song forms. Examination reveals that out of a total of sixteen numbers, excluding the duet sung by Lord Loverule and Nell and the final chorus, nine were written as single stanzas and five were written in strophic form: a ratio of nearly two to one. Moreover, Weisse seems to have maintained this balance for his own one-act version of 1752. Yet, a striking feature of Hiller's piano score, which was given out in response to the success of the new expanded version in 1770, is an apparent lack of strophic songs, and this marks a considerable change in the character of the piece as a whole.

There were thirty-seven numbers in all. Excluding the two final choruses and the duet, only ten of the remaining songs were written in the form of strophic songs. Of these, four were by Standfuss, and six were by Hiller. The remaining new songs were written in single verse forms and increased in ratio from two to one to more than three to one.

These single verse songs fall into the category of ariettas or cavatinas, discussed by Georg Calmus and Jakob Minor in their respective studies on the works of Hiller and Weisse.<sup>1</sup>

Taken at face value, this seems enough to indicate that Weisse was not solely concerned with the task of bringing unity of style to the songs. Indeed, his preference for single verse songs suggests the possibility that he continued to be influenced by the verse forms of the English ballad-opera.

It now seems certain that von Borcke's translation of The Devil to Pay, given in Berlin in 1743, was performed using its English tunes: moreover that Seedo, the German musician who had arranged the music for the original production in London in 1731, was brought over to oversee the music for its première in Berlin, nor was this the only attempt to adapt an English ballad-opera for the German stage. There was, for example, Buschmann's Der Strassenräuber. This was an adaptation of The Beggar's Opera, presumably an attempt to capitalise on Gay's success which did not meet with success.<sup>2</sup> It is possible, however, that a playwright of Weisse's standing, and with his wide circle of correspondents, was informed of these earlier developments in the field of popular entertainment.

Given the preponderance of single verse songs that these pieces contained, German audiences were already used to hearing these song forms, especially since von Borcke's version of Der Teufel had been widely performed in the environs of Hamburg and Breslau after 1743 and in Leipzig during 1752.

It was the success of Standfuss's music, however, which marked a

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1. Georgy Calmus, Die ersten deutschen Singspiele von Standfuss und Hiller (Leipzig, 1908 (Wiesbaden, 1973)): Minor, Ch. F. Weisse (Innsbruck, 1880).

2. According to Jakob Minor, Buschmann was the pseudonym used by Caspar von Borcke, ibid., p. 131. See also Der Strassenräuber (Hamburg University Library, MSS 199).

turning point in the future development of the form of the Singspiel. This process of development was spread over more than twenty years and, perhaps because Weisse never regarded the Singspiel as anything more than popular entertainment, he left no explanation behind to account for the literary changes he made to his text. Yet Weisse, Standfuss and Hiller between them set the final seal on the musical form of the Singspiel and it was in this form that the entertainment flourished and became firmly established on the German stage.

The success of the piece depended equally on the musician and the poet, both as playwright and dramatist. In this respect Weisse was particularly fortunate. He was particularly successful in composing verses which, though they were of no lasting literary merit, nevertheless served a coherent purpose in supporting the drama: he also went to considerable pains to give his verses a measure of individuality.

Indeed, Weisse as a poet in his own right paid particular attention to this aspect of his writing. The verses written for the ballad-opera and the opéra comique had a tendency to conform to a single local style, but by recourse to composing verses containing an unequal number of lines Weisse sought to give his verses individuality. This extended to their formal design. The lower characters were given verses which sometimes contained only two metrical feet, whereas the songs for the principal characters contain four feet per line. In addition to varying their length, his songs were also remarkable for the variety of rhyme schemes that he employed. In this respect, he made full use of cross rhymes, as the following sample of eight-line rhyme schemes indicate:

a	b	a	b	a	c	a	c
a	b	a	b	c	c	d	d
a	b	a	b	c	d	d	c
a	b	b	a	a	d	a	d
a	b	b	b	a	c	a	c

In spite of this painstaking search for variety, in other respects Weisse

showed himself to be surprisingly fallible, for many of his verses are written in iambic rhythm, with four feet to a line.

Compare, for example, the metre used in the first song, which must have dated from the 1752 version, and the final chorus which dated from 1766:<sup>1</sup>

- 1 (a) Das allerbeste Weib bleibt doch  
Des Mannes ärgste Plage:  
Doch quält sie ihn mit Zank und Schrey'n;  
So häng er ihr den Brotkorb hoch,
- 2 (b) Der Teufel ist ein böser Mann,  
Er stiftet lauter Unheil an:  
Doch oft betrügt er sich: wie gut  
Wirkt oft das Böse, das er thut!

The first of these is Weisse's free translation of Coffey's old song He that has the best Wife. The second example is one of the songs modeled on the vaudeville finale of Le diable à quatre.<sup>2</sup> Despite the time lapse of ten years the metrical system remains the same. A rare deviation from this metrical scheme occurs in the song which Lene sings when she tries her pinch of snuff:<sup>3</sup>

Verbietet nur etwas der Frau, ihr guten Herrn!  
Ihr könnt uns doch nicht huten:  
Dann thut man's erst, dann thut man's gern,  
Weil Männer es verbieten.

It is not possible to determine with certainty whether Weisse connected these metrical schemes with a larger design, or whether it was done merely out of respect for the poetic forms which, at that time, were integral with particular play forms. For example the tragedies, then the noblest form of verse, were commonly written in iambic hexameter, and less frequently in iambic pentameter. Thus, the use of a poetic metre of only **four** feet to a line might have been intended to imply a lower status; a style for low comedy. Such a course of action, given the literary climate

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1. Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), p. 5.

2. Ibid., p. 99.

3. Ibid., p. 32.

of the times, might have carried the added advantage of avoiding the pedantic criticism of the Gottsched party, and the risk of another civil action.

It is also interesting to note, however, that most of the new single verse stanzas were given to the main characters. These usually comprise six or eight lines, though cases of seven, nine, or even eleven lines occur.

The bulk of the new strophic songs, on the other hand, were written for the 'low' characters. In the present case these were the servants, from whose lips such songs would have sounded the most natural, and it is interesting to observe that in the expanded version these were composed in a simpler form. They contained only five or seven lines with only two metrical feet to a line. A good example of this type of song is provided at the point of the play when, after the transformation, Lieschen, Frau Liebreich's maid, calls at the cobbler's cottage to find out if her mistress's shoes were ready for collection. She delivers a song, to the annoyance of her mistress whom she fails to recognise, which contains a vivid description of her employer's bad temper:<sup>1</sup>

Wo sie ist, ist der Teufel los  
Toben und lärm  
Kratzen und schwärmen  
Das kann sie bloss,  
Wo sie ist, ist der Teufel los.

Quite separate from the task of writing, Weisse faced a dramatic decision of an altogether different kind. Both Coffey and Sedaine, in their day, had been confronted with the need to decide which particular function their songs would serve in the drama. This had been easier, perhaps, in England or France where writers of such pieces followed an existing tradition. In Germany such precedents were far from being so firmly established. It is clear from the text of Der Teufel that Weisse

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1. Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), p. 52.

was indebted to both of these sources for songs that served different functions in the drama, and used them as stepping-stones towards developing a style of his own. The sense of unity which songs gave to the ballad-opera in England and to the opéras comiques in France made these entertainments especially attractive to their audiences. Once Weisse began to write songs on his own account instead of translating existing pieces, he had no choice but to create original models of his own. In the meantime, Le diable à quatre provided one or two worthwhile ideas, such as the vaudeville finale and ideas for comic songs. In spite of these advantages the opéra comique was not, in itself, entirely suitable as a model for the contemporary modern school of playwrights: the spoken dialogue continued to be written in the outmoded style, which employed rhyming couplets in preference to natural dialogue; while the continued practice of re-using existing vaudeville tunes was a failing of another sort.

For example, the first seven pages of text in Le diable à quatre contain the first five scenes, and Sedaine employs no less than eleven different songs. These are separated by only one or two lines of dialogue. Surprisingly, the dialogue takes the form of natural speech. Because the songs are written to existing tunes, Sedaine was obliged to employ the metrical rhythms demanded by the rhythm of the music. As a result, the metrical rhythms of his stanzas vary from song to song: however, their rhyme schemes depend heavily on rhyming couplets and triplets. This makes the songs appear and sound a little contrived, a weakness which Weisse was careful to avoid.

The first of these songs, written to the tune of Ah! Madame Auron, provides a typical example of the type:<sup>1</sup>

O la méchante femme!	a
O la méchante femme!	a
D'un rien elle s'enflamme:	a

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1. Sedaine, Le diable à quatre (Paris, 1830), p. 135.



Elle crie, elle bat:	b
Ah! c'est un sabbat	b
Je n'ai de ma vie en de pareil debat.	b

The final chorus, written with the same number of lines, is written to a different tune: L'air de la contredanse. As a result, the metrical rhythms match the rhythm of the tune:<sup>1</sup>

Maitre Jacques:	Mon systeme	a
	Est d'aimer le bon vin;	b
	Mes amis, et ma femme qui m'aime.	a
	Quelque peu d'ouvrage et point d' chagrin:	b
	C'est l'vrai bien	c
	Ou je n'y connois rien.	c

In this example the rhyme scheme appears a little less contrived, but the vaudeville style demands that Sedaine ends the verse with an appropriate couplet.

The number of lines to each stanza, therefore, depended entirely upon the length of the tune selected to carry the sense of that part of the action. Such a design, naturally, led to an imbalance of form, but brought the advantage of variety. This, in turn, mitigated the worst effects of the rhyme schemes. Aside from these literary considerations, Sedaine employed music to satisfy two very precise dramatic functions, which sprang from his deliberate choice of form.

The scenes of magic, demons and dancing which make up the plot of The Devil to Pay were all common features of the vaudevilles. No doubt it was for this reason that in 1756, after the time when the new opéras comiques had already superseded the more archaic form, he chose to write Le diable à quatre in the old style. A special feature of this piece was the way in which the actors could share the lines of a song. In doing so they created, in effect, a kind of recitative in which the action of the play is advanced, leading to a climactic piece at the close of the scene. This song allowed one of the actors to comment on the action so far, reflect on their own position or that of one of the other characters.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Ibid., p. 189.

2. Ibid., pp. 135-9.

In this way Sedaine employed music to advance the action as as a means of drawing the attention of the audience to the main points as the plot unfolded. The third scene provides a typical example of this kind. The cook and the two maids to the marquise, in desperation at their plight, threaten to leave the house:<sup>1</sup>

Scene II. Le Cuisinier, Lucile.

Lucile: Même air

Oh! la voilà partie:  
 Oh! la voilà partie:  
 Oui, c'est une furie  
 Comme on ne'en connoit pas  
 Ah! c'est un fracas,  
 Je n'ai de ma vie entendu plus d'éclats.

Elle me demande un verre d'eau, bonnement je  
 le lui apporte; elle me le jette au visage:  
 Marton se met à rire, elle lui campe un  
 soufflet.

Scene III. Le Cuisinier, Lucile, Marton.

Marton: Ariette

Oui, oui, je veux en sortir;  
 J'en jure:  
 L'injure  
 Ne peut se soutenir.  
 Je ne puis le souffrir.  
 Oui, oui, c'est trop long-temps souffrir.  
 A moi des coups! Ah! c'est trop en souffrir:  
 L'affront ne peut se soutenir.  
 Ris donc, sotte, avec ton verre d'eau.

Lucile: Je ne ris pas; mais c'est que ... Ah! j'en  
 sortirai.

Le Cuisinier: J'en sortirai aussi. J'aimerois mieux ...  
 j'aimerois mieux ...

Marton: Je serois bien au désespoir d'y rester; ce  
 qui me fait de la peine, c'est notre maître  
 qui est un si honnête homme.

Air: Ma commere, quand je danse.

Sa complaisance m'assomme;  
 Il est plus doux qu'un mouton.

Le Cuisinier: Jamais un plus honnetê homme  
 N'eut pour femme un tel démon.

Lucile: Il est trop bon.

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1. Ibid., pp. 136-8.

Le Cuisinier: Il est trop bon.

Marton: Il est trop bon.

Le Cuisinier: Il est trop bon.

Lucile: Il est trop bon.  
 Sa complaisance m'assomme;  
 Il est plus doux qu'un mouton.

Le Cuisinier: Que voulez-vous qu'il fasse? Il l'aime;  
 elle est jolie.

Lucile: Air: La bergere un peu coquette.

Une belle  
 Sans cervelle  
 Auroit en vain des attraits:  
 Je sais bien, si j'étois homme,  
 Comme  
 Je la punirois.

Sedaine's scenes were not always constructed in this manner, but the vaudevilles always dominated the scene, limiting the spoken dialogue. The style of the vaudeville allowed Sedaine to convey action through the music; in this case, the actors performed their lines to the tune of Ma commere. This formula was extremely flexible and later in the play in a rather longer scene Margot sings a mischievous song in which she tells how she came to take tobacco.<sup>1</sup>

Weisse saw the value of including this scene in his own play, but carried Sedaine's idea a little further.<sup>2</sup> In the French play, Margot tells how she takes a pinch of snuff to spite her husband, but before she actually takes the snuff she meets the magician. When Weisse made use of the same situation in Der Teufel, he arranged the scene so that Lene takes the snuff to see what it is like. This presented Hiller with a first-rate opportunity to write a song which would have to include action:<sup>3</sup>

Das Schuhflickers Haus

Lene (allein.)

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1. See above, p. 113. See also Sedaine, Le diable à quatre (Paris, 1830), p. 137.

2. Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), p. 32.

3. Ibid.

Verbiestet nur etwas der Frau, ihr guten Herrn!  
 Ihr könnt uns doch nicht hüten:  
 Dann thut man's erst, dann thut man's gern,  
 Weil Manner es verbieten.  
 Sonst hiess ich nur den Tabak Quark,  
 Schalt ihn und nahm ihn nie ===  
 (Sie nimmt Toback.)  
 Pfuy, beisst er doch! (Sie niest.) Itzi, itzi,  
 Itzi - das Ding ist gar zu arg,  
 Itzi, itzi, itzi! ===

Another example occurs after the transformation when Lieschen, the maid, in search of her mistress's shoes, sings her song Where ever she is, there's the Devil to Pay.<sup>1</sup> Whereupon Frau Liebreich boxes her maid's ears. Jobsen, deeply annoyed by his 'wife's' disgraceful behaviour, forces her onto her knees to apologise to Lieschen:<sup>2</sup>

Jobsen: Nieder, nieder  
 Auf die Knie!  
 Oder sieh!  
 Ich fange wieder  
 Dich zu hämmern an,  
 Bis ich nicht mehr kann -  
 Nieder, nieder  
 Auf die Knie!

In both instances Weisse took his ideas from Le diable à quatre. In these songs by Sedaine, action was often implied rather than executed on stage. Weisse, however, deliberately exploited these ideas to the full, allowing Hiller to make the most of the musical effect on behalf of the actors, and the actors to win the maximum applause from their audiences, and their appreciation of the actors' performances could only bring added prosperity to the company. Weisse also experimented with a sequence of songs written after the manner of a vaudeville scene.

The opening scenes of Le diable à quatre were set in the kitchen of the château, and in a series of vaudeville songs the servants reveal their resentment at the treatment they receive at the hands of their employer. In Act I, Scene III of Der Teufel Weisse introduced a similar sequence of songs, in which the servants boast of the various forms their

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1. Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), p. 53. See also Sedaine, Le diable à quatre (Paris, 1830), p. 164.

2. Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), p. 53.

revenge would take, if given a suitable opportunity. For this purpose, he wrote four strophic songs, each separated by a single line of spoken dialogue.<sup>1</sup>

Weisse also borrowed Sedaine's finale. This comprises two separate choruses. The first of these, marked Divertissement, allows each of the actors, with the exception of Frau and Herr Liebreich, to take their farewell of the audience. Thus, each actor was given a verse to himself and, as in the French version, each of the verses embodied a moral point arising from the play. The second chorus also included a verse for each of the actors, but seems to have been intended for the audience to join in with the company in singing the chorus: Der Teufel ist ein Böser Mann.<sup>2</sup>

Clearly, Weisse was influenced by the novelty of Sedaine's work. This is especially evident in Weisse's plot, but he was much less influenced by its style. For example, certain of Sedaine's songs accompanied staged comic situations - Margot's attempt to take snuff; Jacques' forcing the marquise onto her knees to make her apology to her maid, Lucile; a device very rarely employed in the English ballad-operas. To this extent, the songs in Le diable à quatre were much more closely integrated with the action than was the case with The Devil to Pay. Coffey had followed the usual English practice of inserting his songs at those points of the play where they would achieve the greatest comic effect. Unlike the French opéras comiques, they frequently consisted of homilies on city life, a style of comic song popular among the writers of ballad-opera at that time.

Coffey had adapted Jevon's The Devil of a Wife so as to emulate Gay's success with The Beggar's Opera. The outstanding success of this piece had already established the ballad-opera in its early form. English writers, therefore, had no doubts as to what function their songs were

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1. Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), pp. 13-16.

2. Ibid., p. 99. See also his Selbstbiographie (Leipzig, 1806), p. 104, in which he indicates the lack of social music in Germany.

intended to fulfil. Often these were conceived as a succession of squibs, written not so much to support the drama, but to serve the interest of the general satire. For the more efficient execution of this purpose, such songs were written in single stanzas, and made only one point at a time. Conventionally, these were written in the form of a homily, and just as in the opera seria the action ceased while the singer stepped forward to deliver the aria, so in the ballad-opera the action ceased for the actor to deliver not so much a song as a smart riposte:<sup>1</sup>

Peachum: Through all the Employments of Life  
Each Neighbour abuses his Brother;  
Whore and Rogue they call Husband and Wife:  
All Professions be-rogue one another:  
The Priest calls the Lawyer a Cheat,  
The Lawyer be-knaves the Divine:  
And the Statesman, because he's so great  
Thinks his Trade's as honest as mine.

Many of the songs, however, allow the actor to reflect upon the vagaries of fortune:<sup>2</sup>

MacHeath: What Gudgeons are we Men.  
Ev'ry Woman easy Prey.  
Though we have felt the Hook agen  
We bite and they betray.

Thus, there was always a powerful moral at the centre of the songs.

Surprisingly, strophic songs were used very sparingly, and in The Beggar's Opera they arise almost exclusively from the action. A good example is the duet between Polly and Lucy, sung to the tune of Good-Morrow, Gossip Joan:<sup>3</sup>

Lucy: Why How now, Madam Flirt?  
If you thus must chatter;  
And are for flinging Dirt,  
Let's try who best can spatter  
Madam Flirt!

Polly: Why how now, saucy Jade;  
Sure the Wench is tipsy!  
How can you see me made  
The Scoff of such a Gypsy? [To him]  
Saucy Jade! [To her]

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1. Gay, The Beggar's Opera (London, 1729), p. 1.
  2. Ibid., p. 72.
  3. Ibid., p. 58.

The song accompanies their quarrel, and the two women sing one verse each. Only a handful of songs like these were included out of a total of sixty-nine numbers. This clarity of design and the overwhelming success of the piece at the box office attracted a number of imitators.

Coffey was one of the most successful. Most of his songs were written in single stanzas and like those by John Gay moralise on the ways of the world as he knew it. In common with Gay, his strophic songs only occur at those points in the action where they appear to arise 'naturally' from the action of the play: during the party scene, and when Jobson sings to while away the tedium of his work.

Intriguingly, the songs in The Devil to Pay and those by Weisse in Der Teufel frequently hold a number of characteristics in common. For example, they comprise single verses, they are often, though not always, written in the eight-line form. Thus, although it is impossible to claim with certainty that Weisse, at this stage, was influenced by the ballad-opera, the evidence points in that direction; for apart from the songs he had borrowed from Le diable à quatre Weisse wrote a number of verses which continued to moralise on the weaknesses of human nature, just as the English opera writers had done. A good example of this kind of song occurs towards the end of the play, after the magician's spell has been broken. Then, with the two couples on the point of being re-united, Jobsen notices Lene's fine new clothes:<sup>1</sup>

Jobsen: Lene, komm, gieb mir einen Schmatz! ==  
 Aber nein; es wäre um die schönen Kleider  
 Schade, wenn du sie beschmutzttest: du  
 siehst darinn wie was rechts aus.  
 Kleider machen Leute,  
 Kränze machen Bräute,  
 Und ein weisser Federhut  
 Steht auch manchen Dummkopf gut!  
 Sieht man Lenen ihren Mann,  
 Meister Jobsen Zekeln, an?  
 Ja doch, nur nicht heute!  
 Kleide machen Leute.

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1. Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), p. 91.

Lene: Ach! geh du immer her, Jobsen. Ich merke doch, dass ich die schönen Kleider wieder abgeben muss, und alsdann ists einerley, ob sie beschmutzt sind, oder nicht.

Another example combines this moralising style with a strong element of sensibility when Lene, left alone in her cottage at the beginning of the play, reflects upon the fate of women in general:<sup>1</sup>

Lene: Ohne Müh ist selten Brod;  
Freude selten ohne Noth;  
Nie ein Ehmann ohne Plage:  
Kinder niemals ohne Klage:  
Doch wünscht jede so, wie ich,  
Brod, und Mann, und Kinder sich!

Indeed, verses like these carried the moral of the homily to the point where the sense of the words touched upon enotional experiences common to all people and, in this way, appealed to the sensibilities of the audience. Moreover, lines like these made good musical cameos, for when they were set to music they provided a composer like Hiller with an opportunity to paint the scene for the ear, adding to the meaning of the words: an opportunity which he exploited with both great effect and economy of style.<sup>2</sup>

Altogether, of the twenty-four new songs, six were free adaptations of songs from Le diable à quatre; one dealt with Lene's confused state of mind upon the magician's spell being lifted, adding to the psychology of the character; another was a comic song in which she boasts about her fine clothes; but eight of the new songs are written around a moral point in a way that can best be described as the English style: that form of verse built around a well defined moral point. The remaining songs included six strophic songs sung by the lower characters and the magician, and the two vaudeville choruses employed in the finale.

From this it can be seen that Weisse borrowed ideas from both the French and English pieces, and combined these with original ideas of his own; and that he wrought them into a single, unified style. So that,

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1. Ibid., p. 9.

2. See below, p. 197-8.



from the literary point of view, the new songs did not look out of place beside those dating from 1752. The form of the entertainment, however, had undergone a major transformation. Beneath Weisse's scenes of comic farce there were moments of profound sensibility and pathos. The impact of these new elements was all the greater because they were set to music. This allowed the action to be suspended while the actor held the subject of the songs up to the closer scrutiny of the audience.

This has always been one of the functions of theatre music and, indeed, one or two such moments had existed in the 1752 version, but in the expanded version of Der Teufel both the number and emotional range of events like these had been greatly increased. The role of the composer had been important to the success of the piece in 1752, it was equally vital again in 1766. Unfortunately, the death of Standfuss during the intervening years meant that a new musician would have to be found and entrusted with this important aspect of the work. In the event, the task was placed in the hands of a local musician who possessed a talent for writing simple, attractive, singable melodies that had proved to be within the capabilities of amateur singers. Johann Adam Hiller proved entirely sympathetic to Weisse's aims, and set to work immediately with characteristic energy and enthusiasm.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE STYLE AND CHARACTER OF SINGSPIEL AS A MUSICAL FORM

#### A. Hiller's life

Hiller was born at Wendisch-Ossig, near Görlitz in Prussia, on the 25th December 1728. His father combined his duties as a schoolmaster with those of a parish clerk. He died shortly before Hiller's sixth birthday, an event which left the family in difficult financial circumstances. Through the good offices of one of his father's colleagues, and by means of his fine singing voice, Hiller obtained a scholarship to the Gymnasium in Görlitz, where he received instruction on a number of instruments. From there, he obtained a place in the Kreuzschule in Dresden. There he continued his studies under the direction of Homilius, organist and choirmaster at the Kreuzkirche. During this period of his education, Hiller undertook a more detailed study of the harpsichord and thorough bass. He also continued his study of the flute under one Schmidt, a member of the Elector's court orchestra in Dresden.

Equally important as the quality of teaching that Hiller received, however, was his exposure to the Italian opera, maintained by the Elector. This so fascinated Hiller as a pupil that he went so far as to persuade one of the court singers to borrow a number of opera scores for him. From these he made copies, staying up until four o'clock in the morning to finish the task. As a result of these endeavours, he came to know and understand the form of the operas, and especially the technique of arranging music for drama.

In this way Hiller familiarised himself with the works of his favourite composers: Johann Adolf Hasse and Karl Heinrich Graun.

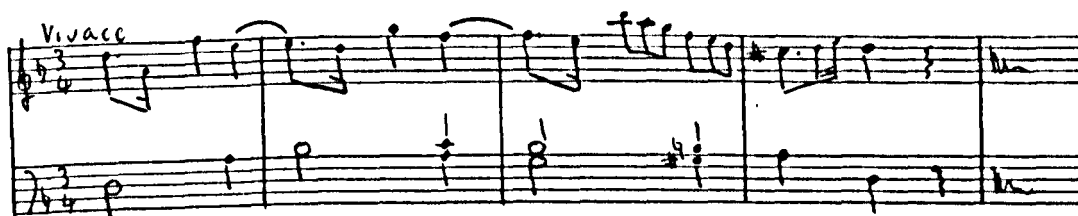
Hiller was already showing signs of great industry and enthusiasm in learning his art, including composition. Then, in 1751, he entered the

university of Leipzig, where he studied Jurisprudence, Literature and History. Here he met the leading intellectuals of the day, men such as the novelist Gellert and, of course, Professor Gottsched, whose discourses he would have attended. In this way, as a student of literature, he would have become aware of the great literary controversy which at that time still reverberated between the Swiss party and Gottsched. Also, he would have learned of other more important developments that were taking place at the time in German Letters. Later, in 1761, he was to set some of Gellert's Geistliche Oden and Lieder for the Grosse Konzerte: which preceded the better known Gewandhaus concerts. In the meantime, in spite of training for a career in law, Hiller maintained his musical interests, serving as a musician in the local orchestra and as a singer. It is unfortunate that Hiller failed to leave an account concerning the events surrounding Koch's first production of Der Teufel in 1752, as he may well have seen a performance of the piece; and since he did not leave the university until 1754 he must have been aware of the pamphlet war that broke out in 1752-53. Like Weisse, however, Hiller remained entirely aloof from the controversy.

During this time Weisse's duties while in the service of the Graf von Geyersberg entailed accompanying his employer to the lectures in jurisprudence given at the university. In this way Weisse and Hiller became acquainted, though it seems unlikely that there was any connection between Hiller and Koch's theatre company, in the way that had existed formerly between Weisse and Frau Neuber's company during his student days.

When Hiller left the university, he obtained a post as Hofmeister with the Graf Brühl, the nephew of the prime minister of Saxony. Hiller's duties now took him to Dresden, where he directed the concerts given by the family, and there was the additional advantage of being able to see more of Hasse's operas. This relatively tranquil period in

Hiller's life came to an end when his employer, having returned to Leipzig, enrolled as a student at the university. Thus Hiller once more found himself in the city of his student days, where he resumed contact with his friend the novelist Gellert, and others with whom he had lost contact during his absence. From this time on he devoted his energies to launching himself on a full-time musical career. Hiller, however, inclined to be a hypochondriac, was overtaken by illness and in 1760 he relinquished his post with the Graf Brühl on the grounds of ill health. At this point his university training began to influence the course of his career, and Hiller began to supplement his income as a musician and composer by occasionally translating and editing foreign books for publication. His efforts met with success, and he was able to expand on this success in 1761 when Breitkopf published his settings of Gellert's Geistliche Lieder. The following year a complete set of sonatas appeared under the title Loisir musical. These were in a set of attractive pieces composed in the galant style:<sup>1</sup>



Now recovered from his illness, he resumed his musical career, serving as a flautist with the local concerts and, occasionally, as a singer. He was not a gifted performer, but his ability as an arranger contributed to the success of the local concerts and later to the success of his own series of subscription concerts.

As director, Hiller introduced a number of changes in the programmes, introducing items of choral music: among them was one of his own

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1. Hiller, Loisir musical (Leipzig, 1762), No. I.

occasional cantatas, but he did not use these concerts merely to serve his own interests. Quite the reverse: Hiller regarded the service of music as his primary aim, and promoted any vocal pieces that he thought worthy of merit for the benefit of the public. Among these pieces were a number of Hasse's operatic arias which Hiller re-arranged as concert pieces. He also demonstrated his grasp of a basic truth, namely, that the public would respond favourably to novelty provided it was pleasing. In this way Hiller introduced Hasse's music to a wider audience, for until that time his pieces were heard only in Dresden. Under Hiller's leadership these concerts achieved ever greater popularity, but the presentation of opera demanded skilled singers and it was difficult to obtain singers outside of Dresden or Berlin.<sup>1</sup> Hiller, however, secured the services of two relatively unknown amateur singers, Corona Schröter and Gertrud Schmehling. Hiller's trust in these two ladies proved to be well placed and in a short space of time they had become local celebrities. Besides these innovations to the programmes, Hiller began to contribute suites and symphonies of his own. Thus, on one hand Hiller, the conductor, strove to serve the interests of the concert-goers drawn from the merchant classes, on the other, Hiller as a composer served the interests of German music and his fellow musicians. It was at this time that his career in the theatre began.

Following his return to Leipzig in 1765, Koch and his company of actors enjoyed enough success to move from their old theatre in the Quandts Hof and open in the new theatre on the 6th October 1766.<sup>2</sup> If this momentum was to be maintained, Koch realised that he would need to stage the kind of musical entertainments that had attracted large audiences before the war, but then he had been able to call upon the services of a very competent house musician. With Standfuss now dead, this

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1. C. Burney, A Musical Tour in Germany, the Netherlands and United Provinces (London, 1771-3), 2 vols. See II, p. 96.

2. Blümner, Geschichte des Theaters (Leipzig, 1818), p. 158.

crucial post was vacant. Hiller was the obvious candidate to fill the post. Apart from his energy and enthusiasm, there was his proven ability as an administrator. Of equal importance was his sympathy for the needs of the semi-professional singers, demonstrated in his adaptations of operatic arias for his amateur singers. At the same time, his life-long study of Hasse's operas had left him with a grasp of the basic principles of writing music for the stage. In the event, Koch offered the vacant post to Hiller, who promptly accepted this opportunity to compose for the theatre.<sup>1</sup>

His first commission was to supply the additional songs required for Weisse's expanded version of Der Teufel ist los (1766). Hiller's songs were well received and this first success led to a spate of commissions. He supplied the music for all of Weisse's Singspiele: Lottchen am Hofe (1767), Die Liebe auf dem Lande (1768), Die Jagd (1770), Der Dorfbalzbier (1771), Der Aerntekrantz (1772), Der Krieg (1772) and Die Jubelhochzeit (1773). In addition to these, Hiller composed music for two one-act pieces: Lisuart und Dariolette (1766) and Die Muse (1767).<sup>2</sup> These texts were supplied by the less well known writer Daniel Schiebeler. After Koch's death in 1775, Hiller received only three more commissions. The first of these was by Weisse and is of interest as the first example of a Singspiel written for children, Die kleine Aehrenleserin, published in 1778. Hiller also supplied music for a one-act piece by A.G. Meissner, Das Grab des Mufti, published in 1778, and a one-act piece by Schmidt, Poltis, oder das gerettete Troja, published in 1782. In addition to these there were the arias he added to the expanded version of Der lustige Schuster (1768).<sup>3</sup>

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1. Hiller (ed. A. Einstein) Lebensläufe deutscher Musiker von ihnen selbst erzählt (Leipzig, 1915), i, "Johann Adam Hiller", p. 23.

2. Dates in brackets indicate first performances.

3. Hiller was careful to prepare keyboard editions of all his Singspiele. These editions are now widely distributed among library collections, such as the Hirsch Collection held in the British Library in London. In addition to the keyboard editions, various handwritten theatre copies have also survived. See Appendix III, pp. 326-455.

While Hiller was still in the service of Graf Brühl, he formed an attachment to Christiana Eleonora Gestweitz, who in 1755 became his wife. They had six children, among them Friedrich Adam, destined in adult life to become director of music at the Königsberg theatre.<sup>1</sup>

In 1760 Hiller was invited by Breitkopf, the publisher, to contribute articles to a weekly journal Musikalischer Zeitvertreib.<sup>2</sup> This failed after a year of publication, but it led to Hiller's lasting interest in musical journalism which, in turn, found expression in a growing number of literary enterprises. The culmination of this work is to be found in his book Ueber die Musik und deren Wirkungen (Hamburg, 1781). Of more lasting interest, however, were his continued efforts to found a musical journal which eventually found considerable success in the weekly journal Wöchentliche Nachrichten und Anmerkungen die Musik betreffend (Leipzig, 1766-70). The journal drew on Hiller's combined experience as composer, critic, translator and editor. He brought under a single cover articles contributed from the main European centres of culture. Many pieces were contributed by the encyclopedists, or members of their circle in Paris. Together, they provide a valuable insight into the state of musical criticism of the times, and the weight that critics placed upon aesthetics in their discussions. The articles also reveal the importance that Hiller himself attached to the modern school. The articles that deal with theatre music are of particular interest, for these were mostly French, and their ideas were disseminated in an open spirit of co-operation and enlightenment. They are of considerable benefit in identifying issues that Hiller and his contemporaries found worthy of discussion.

Hiller's experience as a theatre composer soon confirmed his belief in the need for a song school, at which future generations of German singers could receive proper training. In pursuance of this long-

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1. Kawada, Johann Adam Hiller (Marburg/Lahn), Phil. Diss., p. 26.

2. Hiller, Selbstbiographie (Leipzig, 1915), p. 19 et seq.

cherished objective he founded one of the first song schools, the Privat-konservatorium, in Leipzig in 1775.<sup>1</sup> The school was opened for the benefit of anyone who sought some kind of musical training, and his services to musical education made him one of the most celebrated contributors to the service of German music of his generation. In response, the grateful citizens of Leipzig began to bestow honours upon him.

Eventually the long-established series of concerts, known as the Grosse Konzerte, came to a close in 1778. They were replaced by a new series performed in the purpose-built concert hall, known locally as the Gewandhaus. Hiller was the first musical director to take the baton in 1781. There were other benefits. In 1779 he had been appointed musical director at the Paulinerkirche. In 1784 he was made musical director at the Neue Kirche.

Understandably, his health failed to withstand the strain, and the following year he laid aside all of his engagements. Characteristically, he soon found himself occupied preparing an edition of Handel's Messiah, subsequently performed in the cities of Berlin, Breslau and Leipzig. This, however, was to be his last major undertaking. Shortly afterwards he retired from public life, accepting the post of cantor and musical director at the St Thomasschule in Leipzig, where he succeeded the composer Dölz in the same post that Bach had previously held.

Hiller devoted the few remaining years of his life to writing his Allgemeine Choral-Melodien. He died in Leipzig on the 16th June 1804.

It is most fitting that Hiller is now remembered for his theatre music and for his contribution to German song. Many of his simple Lieder passed into the popular repertoire, largely as a result of his energy in publishing the keyboard editions of his music to the Singspiele. As a result, later compilers of musical anthologies found it an easy task to

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1. Kawada, Johann Adam Hiller (Marburg/Lahn, 1969), Phil. Diss., p. 28.



include authentic examples of his work. Apart from his music, his output as an author was enough in itself to guarantee him a permanent place in the history of music.

#### B. Some aspects of Italian style

Up to the time when Hiller took over his duties as director of music in Koch's theatre, he had been free to pursue his own musical inclinations. In these circumstances, he chose to write his own compositions in the galant style. This not only reflected his own preference, but also his desire to expose provincial audiences in Leipzig to the more sophisticated music enjoyed at the court of the Elector in the capital, Dresden.

This was the same style that had been employed by Hasse, and which Hiller had striven so hard to assimilate, especially Hasse's technique of uniting drama and music.

This was also the time when opera seria stood at its zenith, a time when the human voice took pride of place. Because of this the orchestra was sometimes reduced to little more than a string quartet, its sole purpose being to support the power and brilliance of the singers. In this respect Hasse was particularly well favoured since he had married the leading soprano of the day, Faustina Bordoni. This piece of good fortune, together with his own talent combined with the advantage of writing opera for the court theatre in Dresden, brought Hasse early success, and before long widespread fame.

One serious disadvantage with this kind of music lay in its heavy dependence upon the quality of singers that were available. A disadvantage of a different kind lay within the music itself. The style of writing depended for its clarity on the thinness of the orchestral texture. Thus, the music could offer but a limited scope for experiment and, probably for this reason, it did not survive the social changes that were

already taking place, and which coincided with the time when the Hasses were retired from the Elector's service at the end of the Seven Years' War.

The new age was epitomised in Paris by the encyclopedists, a group of intellectuals led by Diderot, whose first duty appears to have been to take stock of their own rapidly changing world. Debates which might once have served after-dinner conversations for months in the salons were now conducted in the press, and the topics ranged freely over most aspects of everyday life. In the new intellectual climate, writers felt themselves free to offer opinions far outside of their own special field of knowledge. Thus Rousseau, the philosopher, wrote Emile, a study in child education, but was equally well known for his success with Le devin du village; Philidor, the chess master, was by this time the foremost composer of the new opéras comiques in Paris; and Jean le Rond D'Alembert presumably the same man with whom Weisse conversed during his stay in the French capital, although a mathematician wrote a series of articles on the nature of music.

In these articles d'Alembert subjected the state of French music to a searching examination. They are written in the discursive style of the day, and they are all the more interesting now for the way in which they touch on all kinds of musical matters. Perhaps this was the reason they made an impression on Hiller. He translated these articles and published the whole series in his journal. Among other things, they provide a valuable commentary on the musical life of the times, on the weakness of French music and the advantages enjoyed by the Italians:<sup>1</sup>

Our French composers see no further than heaping voice upon voice, they seek effect by filling out the parts; the singing-voice is then smothered by an overcluttered accompaniment. ... The source of this fault lies in the prejudice with which our artists see more in the harmony than in the vocal

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1. Hiller, Nachrichten und Anmerkungen (Leipzig, 1766-70), Bde 4. See iii, pp. 293-4.

line ... not that a well wrought harmony is not to be treasured. It strengthens the vocal line, and supports it in a pleasant way, and if it is used sparingly, it turns out well for the ear, in a natural manner and without effort. ... Even in this lies one of the foremost beauties of Italian music, that is the unity of the melody, the necessity of which Rousseau has already demonstrated in his writings. The Italians desire nothing which occurs in the accompaniment or in the bass, to detract from the main subject [i.e. the melody] and they are of the opinion that the attention [of the listener] is lost, if the [musical] interest is divided between the bass and melody ... The harmony must strengthen the vocal line ... a good bass line is a foundation for the vocal-line which the various accompanying voices develop and make intelligible to the listener.

The article is valuable for its first-hand description of the Italian style, and demonstrates the extent to which it dominated the progressive musical thought of the time. D'Alembert balances his praise with some well directed criticisms on the weaknesses of Italian music; but given Hiller's predisposition towards the galant style it is perhaps only to be expected that articles of this kind would find favour within the pages of his journal. The fact of their appearance reflects the esteem in which he held the new methods of criticism, and which began to be applied to all the arts at that time.

More important than the antiquarian interest these articles provide is the explanation they offer as to the kind of musical criteria Hiller would have applied to the music he wrote for use in the theatre, for such music demands of the composer an understanding of the workings of the stage and, preferably, a grasp of the more intangible relationship that exists between the drama and music. It seems clear that Hiller, as both a student of Literature and Music, brought an unusual degree of insight into his work. This training, together with his study of Hasse's operas, not to mention his own vocal compositions already introduced into the Grosse Konzerte, were qualification enough for the kind of work he

was about to embark upon. All the more so since the techniques were so closely related to those of the opera, and these were dependent indeed upon the quality of the librettist's work.

In the opera, for example, a librettist would set out the text according to the conventions of the genre, so that the lines destined to become the recitative would culminate in a six or eight-line stanza. This, at the hands of the composer, then became the set-piece aria which brought the scena to its climax. Moreover, the librettist knew well enough to construct the verse in such a way as to allow the composer enough latitude to divide the lines according to their sense. In this way the composer was able to make up the 'A' and 'B' sections of his aria making the best use of the text, repeating phrases as necessary to satisfy the formal demands of the music.

In Der Teufel, in much the same way as an aria grew out of the recitative in a scena, Weisse's songs were written so as to arise 'naturally' from the spoken dialogue. Indeed, his preference for the single verse form, as mentioned in the previous chapter, led him to make extensive use of the arietta and, given the complete absence of a recitative to build up to the song, the ritornello which always preceded it carried an additional burden. The eight or so bars of the ritornello served as the sole link between between the spoken dialogue and the music, preparing the audience for the kind of song they were about to hear. Significantly, Hiller paid close attention to this detail, marrying the music closely to the action.

It is, perhaps, surprising in view of this that the new overture which Hiller eventually wrote for the new version of Der Teufel in 1770 was written in the style of a symphony. This was Neapolitan in character and apparently stands quite separate from any of the music which follows.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Hiller, Die verwandelten Weiber (Leipzig, 1770), p. 1.

This is partly explained by the internal structure of the play. For example, it was impossible to write an overture that led directly into the music of the opening scene, since there was a complete scene of dialogue to be spoken before the first song was performed. There was also the question of convention to take into consideration. The overture, in the form of a symphony, was the acceptable prelude to the drama which followed. The aesthetical consideration, as to what precise function it was intended to serve, was already being questioned by the French encyclopedists, and their views on this point of interest were among those reviewed in d'Alembert's articles:<sup>1</sup>

There is in our [French] operas only one kind of symphony, which affords but a single view; it is the overture. Those by Lulli, so lacking in good taste, all the more so since they have been cobbled upon the same last for sixty years, or more ... That is no overture.

Clearly the traditional so-called French overture had already outlived its usefulness, and its critics were searching for a closer relationship between the opening music and the kind of entertainment that would follow:<sup>2</sup>

[An overture is the] musical item that sets an opera in motion, and which prepares the listener for what he will hear later. The character of this piece must, therefore, be varied according to the circumstances which confront the audience. Why then must we have now only one kind of overture? after the manner of the Italians and always with an Allegro, Andante and Minuet! Minuet tempo, characteristic of the dance, is especially out of place. I [d'Alambert] maintain, in company with other modern writers, that an overture should be the introduction to, or contain, the subject matter of the opera which follows; this introduction seems to me no more difficult to grasp or to compose than the so-called recapitulations or the cadenzas in Italian arias.

Although the writer is primarily concerned with the nobler forms of opera seria, his criticisms apply equally to the overtures which were

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1. Hiller, Nachrichten und Anmerkungen (Leipzig, 1766-70), iii, p. 298.

2. Ibid.

played before the opéras comiques. Significantly, this specific criticism had already been accepted in England.

When Dr Pepusch, the composer who arranged the music for The Beggar's Opera, elected to write the overture in the French style, he added greatly to the humour of the piece. He achieved his object by shortening the opening Adagio, and then by composing the contrasting Allegro section in the style of a fugue on one of the livelier tunes used in the ballad-opera. This was Air XLVII, I'm like a Skiff on the Ocean toss'd, which with its lively compound tempo made a most acceptable skit on the rather ponderous French overture style:<sup>1</sup>



Hiller's views on the music to The Beggar's Opera were forthright: as to the verses, he declared them to be wretched - just like the dance tunes which accompanied them: but he found the overture much more praiseworthy - Dr Pepusch deserving all the more credit for his good workmanship.<sup>2</sup> Despite his admiration for the work by Pepusch, Hiller developed his own style of writing. He had no doubts about the kind of overture he would employ, though he never revealed the precise function he intended this music to serve, nor the manner in which his aim could be

1. Gay, The Beggar's Opera (London, 1729), p. 77. See also The Musical Supplement attached. Compare p. 3, The Overture, with Air XLVII on p. 35 of the Supplement.

2. Hiller, Nachrichten und Anmerkungen (Leipzig, 1766-70), iii, p. 149.

fulfilled. What is more certain is that the existing tolerance of empty conventions was becoming less and less acceptable. Indeed, the most modern ideas on the subject were published by Hiller himself in the pages of his journal:<sup>1</sup>

The natural and essential character of an overture is that it proclaims the opening scene, or that it serves as a ritornello to the setting before which the first scene will be played.

The last movement of the symphony which then inevitably took the form of a minuet (or some other running triple metre) was a boon to a resourceful composer. Dance movements provided ample opportunity for a composer to paint scenes for the benefit of the mind. In this way, it was possible for a composer to write an overture that reflected the general atmosphere of a play without anticipating its best tunes.

The contemporary view of French music which, with the energetic support of the encyclopedists continued to gain ground during the 1770s, was that harmonic novelties which delighted the ear robbed the melodic line of its appeal which, in turn, robbed the music of its balance and unity. Italian music, on the other hand, deliberately constructed in light, three-part textures especially so as to support the melodic interest, did not depend upon harmonic effect. Yet dependence upon melodic interest alone led to excesses of a different sort, with the tiresome divisions performed by some of the singers, but this complaint was probably a symptom of a clever musical effect that had itself already begun to pall. For the most part, Italian music was still in a position of almost universal ascendancy.

The symphonies with their dance movements were written as separate pieces and were quite unsuitable to serve as overtures, for they bore no similarity to the entertainment that followed, especially if it was an opera seria, but this was far from being the case when symphonies written

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1. Hiller, Nachrichten und Anmerkungen (Leipzig, 1766-70), iii, p. 278.

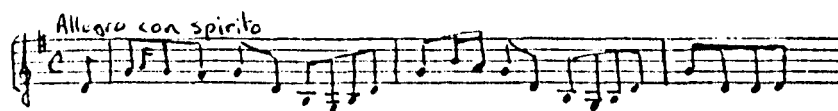
in this style were performed before comic operas. In this case the inclusion of dance movements could be a positive benefit in providing suitable music for the entertainment which followed.

### C. Hiller's overture

The four-movement layout of the Neapolitan overture, developed by Alessandro Scarlatti, had already given way to its more compact three-movement form, which remained in common use during the 1760s. In the cities where opera seria was still maintained, these sinfonia avanti l'opera proved adaptable to local needs, and took on slightly different characteristics in different places.

Hamburg, Munich and Dresden continued to foster the opera seria and in those cities the overture continued to be composed as a separate symphony. In Dresden this had taken on a form close to the symphonies performed at concerts. These pieces were of a hybrid character, and fell somewhere between the old concertato style and the more modern incisive style which paralleled developments in the keyboard sonata. This was the style which Hasse used for his operas and which Hiller would have known so well as a boy. The overture to Hasse's opera Arminio provides a good example of the type.

The design is in the typical three-movement form, written in the major mode, and intended to be performed as a single unit. The first movement, however, is interesting for its unexpected degree of individuality. Laid out in ternary form, it contained elements reminiscent of both the aria and the cyclical form of the old concerto grosso. Thus, its opening theme, shared by all the instruments, recalls the function of the ritornello:<sup>1</sup>




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1. Das erbe deutscher Musik (Mainz, 1957-), Bde 27. See iii, p. 3, Hasse "Arminio".



The energy of this opening figure merges into a brief transition which heralds a second subject in the dominant:<sup>1</sup>



This song-like theme, unlike the later symphony, is not part of an exposition, but forms the basis of an extended central episode. In this section, the new theme is employed in a manner commonly found in the aria; and, after a brief sojourn in the relative minor, the movement closes with a recapitulation of the opening section in the tonic key of G major.

The second movement, in binary form, is marked Alla polacca. Written in the tonic minor, this is possibly included as a rhetorical reference to the majesty of the Elector's position as King of Poland:<sup>2</sup>



The last movement takes the form of a courtly minuet and returns to the tonic key of G major:<sup>3</sup>



The minuet, associated with the ballroom, makes an incongruous prelude to the opening scenes of a dramatic opera seria. Indeed, taken at face value, the inclusion of music of this kind did nothing to lessen later criticisms of its weakness. On the other hand, those audiences before whom these pieces were performed expected to find the spectacle of the drama mixed with a measure of courtly ritual. Dance movements, at

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1. Ibid., p. 5.
  2. Ibid., p. 11.
  3. Ibid., p. 12.

the risk of being condemned for their levity when taken out of context, were then an integral part of a strict code of social behaviour. Therefore, it does not necessarily follow that because an overture to an opera seria included light-hearted dance movements they were also necessarily trivial entertainments. In the context of the times, they formed part of a set-piece of courtly ceremonial. These considerations aside, the structure of the melodies also belonged to the music of the Establishment. Ironically, in the German states this same Establishment gave enthusiastic support to the opera buffa.

As the craze for opera buffa spread across Europe, winning audiences among the ranks of the aspiring middle classes, the new music like that of the opera seria acquired conventions of its own. La serva padrona has been heralded as an archetype when it seems more likely that Pergolesi employed a style of writing already popular.<sup>1</sup> The added success of his interludes was valuable in that it gave added impetus to the genre. Soon everyone learned to recognise its rapid passages, its frequent crescendos and its leaping motifs:<sup>2</sup>



Unlike the opera seria, the subjects of these operas were to be found in the everyday lives of ordinary people. Portrayed by the characters of the commedia dell'arte, an important association was established in the minds of audiences. In the first place, the music was intended to amuse, but it was also associated with the progressive theatre of the

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1. G.B. Pergolesi, La Serva Padrona (Naples, 1733)

2. Ibid.

time; in Germany it was adapted to meet the needs of the Singspiel: in France those of the opéras comiques.

Standfuss's overture to Der Teufel was never published, although it was most likely used for the première of the extended version in 1766. When Hiller published his piano score in 1770, he informed his public that he had taken the opportunity to discard the old overture, which he did not like, and replace it with something more suitable. Unfortunately, neither of these pieces appears in the theatre score. Nevertheless, because of these circumstances, Hiller's overtures to Der Teufel and to Der lustige Schuster are of considerable stylistic interest, especially since the overture to Der Teufel was not, in fact, written until 1770, four years after its successful première.

The new overture, even though it was laid out in a conventional three-movement plan, shares few characteristics with the kind of overture that Hasse had employed for the opera seria. The first movement is written in the more modern two-part form which, instead of looking back to the older concerto layout, embodied the elementary principles of sonata form: the two parts corresponding to an exposition and its recapitulation:<sup>1</sup>

A                      A<sup>1</sup>

Within this basic plan each section ends at a clearly defined cadence point, and what can only be described as the exposition leads into a seven-bar episode which separates the two halves and which also serves as a rudimentary development section. This leads to the recapitulation.

Hiller's use of key relationships is also forward-looking in as much as the changes of key mark the progress of the musical 'events' within the piece. The movement opens with a festive motif in typical buffa style (a) and its answer (b) is stated in the tonic key of C major:<sup>2</sup>

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1. Hiller, Die verwandelten Weiber (Leipzig, 1770), p. 1.

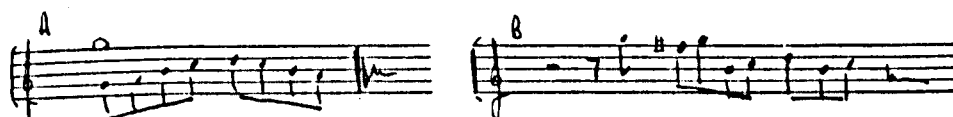
2. Ibid.



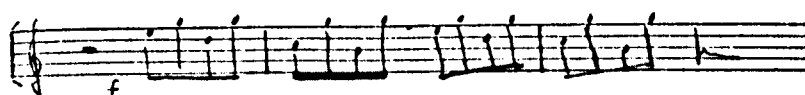
The sub-theme (b) then supplies the thematic material which leads to the transition. The ensuing crescendo then takes the music to a cadence in the dominant G major:<sup>1</sup>



The second subject group, by contrast, is typically more feminine and again comprises two melodic ideas:<sup>2</sup>



The second of these turns out to be a brief dance-like figure which leads into the codetta:<sup>3</sup>

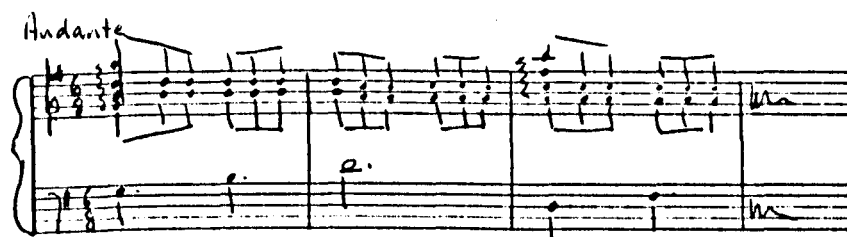


The development is built out of a single motif arising out of material heard already in the exposition. This is treated sequentially and leads back to the key of D minor. Hiller then begins the reprise in

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1. Ibid., p. i-viii.
  2. Ibid.
  3. Ibid.

G minor, and employs the transition to lead the music back to the tonic key of C major.

The second movement, marked Andante, is written in the dominant key. Hiller chose to write the slow movement in the rhythm of a siciliana, another common feature of buffa music. His fondness for progressions of thirds, however, gives it more the character of a serenade:<sup>1</sup>



The final movement, marked Allegro assai, is written in ternary form. Once more Hiller used typical buffa melodies to generate an atmosphere of brilliance and festivity:<sup>2</sup>



The layout of these overtures was determined as much by convention as by any deeper considerations of combining this music with the opening scenes, but the style in which the music was written was a different matter altogether. An overture written in the older galant style reflected sentiments already associated with the classical characters of the opera seria: the music of opera buffa belonged to the everyday world of the commedia dell'arte. This was the style that Hiller, like his predecessor Standfuss, continued to adapt for the Singspiel. From this it can be seen that he intended his overture to entertain the audience before the curtain rose at the start of the performance; he also

1. Ibid., p. v.

2. Ibid., p. vii.

intended that it should prepare the listener for the kind of entertainment that would follow. An overture of this type could never be integral with its opening scenes, but clearly it served a function not so very different from that of the prologue spoken before a play or, for that matter, the ritornello which precedes a song. It was this attention to matters of technical detail that marks many of his overtures.

For example, Reichardt drew attention to the lilting theme in the overture Die Liebe auf dem Lande as Hiller's illustration of the rustic setting for the action which follows:<sup>1</sup>



In contrast, a military motif provides the opening theme in his symphony to Der Krieg:<sup>2</sup>



These stand in marked contrast to the opening theme that Hiller composed for Der lustige Schuster:<sup>3</sup>



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1. Hiller, Die Liebe auf dem Lande (Leipzig, 1771), p. 3. See also Reichardt, Über die deutsche comische Oper (Hamburg, 1774), p. 12.
  2. Hiller, Der Krieg (Leipzig, 1776), p. 3.
  3. Hiller, Der lustige Schuster (Leipzig, 1771), p. 1.

for this was the sequel to Der Teufel, and the action was once again centred upon the single, central low character Jobsen Zeckel. For this purpose Hiller seems to have preferred to return to the buffa style with its fast pace and leaping melodic figures, recalling the older style of the commedia dell'arte rather than the more pastoral style of the opéras comiques.

#### D. Hiller's approach to the songs

For some time before Hiller began to write music for the German stage, he had been steadily gaining in reputation as a composer of simple, attractive songs. Indeed, for many people his music already evoked the atmosphere and style of folk music. It might be expected, in these circumstances, that the songs he wrote for the Singspiele would have been written in equally simple, straight-forward folk song forms. Surprisingly, this is rarely the case. Only a few of his theatre songs fall into conventional song forms, and it is not always a simple matter to decide the most suitable category in which to place them.

Many of Hiller's theatre songs are based on arietta-form and demonstrate their close links with the opera buffa. These pieces were mostly performed without the da capos favoured by the singers of the opera seria. Nevertheless, Hiller designated these songs Arien: a reminder, perhaps, that in his own time the terms Arie and arietta were interchangeable, though clearly many of his songs did not belong to these categories. For this reason he also used the more general term Gesänge (vocal music) to describe some of his songs. Thus the songs from Der Teufel are to be found listed under the general heading Register der Arien und Gesänge in his keyboard editions.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Hiller, Die verwandelten Weiber (Leipzig, 1770), p. 71. Hiller uses the term Arien in the foreword to his keyboard edition to include all of the songs, ariettas and ballads alike.

It is frequently the case that vocal forms arise out of the demands of the text to be set. In the case of opera seria this situation does not as a rule occur very often, since the librettist's concern was to write a form of drama that served the interests of music. In time this resulted in a form of working in which the lines of a scena would be laid out with the section destined to become the recitative ending with a stanza. This usually (though not necessarily) comprised eight lines: the first four lines supplying the 'A' section and the second four lines the 'B' section of the ensuing aria. This piece brought the scene to a satisfactory conclusion and provided a climactic point of rest for the music.

As mentioned already, this situation did not arise in the case of the Singspiele. Since circumstances had not favoured the establishment of any literary conventions within the genre, there were no fixed rules to govern the music beyond a free adaptation of forms borrowed from the opera buffa. Thus, although many of Weisse's songs were written in eight lines, others contained as many as eleven lines. Consequently, Hiller introduced musical forms that would accommodate Weisse's irregular stanzas. For the purpose of analysis and the discussion which follows, his songs can be grouped into three main categories.

The first of these groups, the strophic songs, also included the vaudeville choruses used in the finale. In these songs Hiller divided the lines of the verses into convenient units which, in turn, provided the rhythmic foundation upon which he built the melodic phrases. The best verses for this purpose contained eight lines. Each pair of lines then provided the usual fore and after phrase structure conventionally demanded by song forms, and which resulted in a sectional layout. This, in turn, provided the means of writing melody in the conventional A A B A folk song form. In the case of a seven-line verse, Hiller found it necessary to repeat one of the lines. In those cases where there were fewer



lines, he reduced the melody to sixteen bars, adopting a simpler A B form.<sup>1</sup>

The second group includes the arietta and those songs derived from arietta form. For these a different approach was necessary. In the case of the arietta, Hiller divided the lines of the stanza according to the sense of the words. Thus, in the process of setting the seven-line stanza Immer Bier und Branntewein Hiller used the first two lines to provide the musical structure for the whole of section A. He then composed the music for the B section out of the remaining five lines of the verse.<sup>2</sup> In some cases the demands of the text led him to adopt an A B C scheme. In his efforts to meet the demands of the text in songs of this type, Hiller always regarded his own music as being subservient to the written word.

The third and final group includes all those songs written in other forms. These include a number of songs which Weisse had written in two stanzas, but which Hiller set by various means as through-composed songs. This innovatory formal design had the advantage of allowing him enough freedom to meet the changing demands of the text, while avoiding the tedium of a succession of strophic songs. In one instance he combined two verses of Lieschen's song, Ist das ein schön Gesicht, preferring to set the two stanzas in a style resembling that of the rondo.<sup>3</sup> In another, Lene's aria Das ist der Himmel sicherlich, he was equally prepared to divide the ten lines of the stanza, setting the resulting five-line sections of verse in two separate movements.<sup>4</sup> Thus, he composed his songs

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1. See below, p. 183.

2. See below, p. 198.

3. Hiller, Die verwandelten Weiber (Leipzig, 1770), p. 9. This is a point discussed by Reichardt in his book, Über die deutsche comische Oper (Hamburg, 1774), p. 9. At this point in his appreciation of Hiller's work, he draws attention to this peculiarity of style:

die vielleicht by ihm aus dem Französischen Rondeau  
entstanden ist, nichts weniger aber als Rondeau  
selbst ist.

4. Hiller, Die verwandelten Weiber (Leipzig, 1770), p. 45.

Der Brief ist lob. 1<sup>te</sup> Gril, oder:

Die verurtheilten Dräber-

Einige in der

von 1811

Gyllen-

Küttner.



Unter der Aufschrift eines gezeichneten  
Partitur zum gesungenen Gesangs-  
1. 2. H. Seite.

13/31,

taking the greatest care to maintain the interest of the audience, and also to highlight moments of special interest in the action.

E. The musical sources for *Der Teufel ist los*

Studies of Hiller's theatre music are based on evidence provided either by the handwritten scores which survive or, more commonly, by the more accessible keyboard editions which Hiller published. In the case of Der Teufel this presents a curious problem. The theatre manuscript Mus. MSS 1190 (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek) is the copy handed to Herr Küttner, the Lord Chamberlain.<sup>1</sup> Thus, it must date from 1766. The keyboard edition, however, was not published until 1770, four years later.

The theatre copy reflects the kind of performances that were staged for the benefit of audiences; the keyboard editions reveal the care with which Hiller prepared a complete version of the music of his Singspiele for use in the drawing room. In the case of Der Teufel there are many discrepancies between the two versions of the music. Indeed, many of the songs were completely re-written for the keyboard edition. Because of this, it is difficult to say with certainty which version of the music is the more important: the stage version, which established the popularity of the music in the first place, or the keyboard version in which form the music passed into the popular repertoire.

Quite apart from these obstacles to the music, a difficulty of another kind arises in the case of the songs to Der Teufel and its sequel, Der lustige Schuster. The copyist, understandably, found no reason to signify which of them had been composed by Standfuss. Fortunately, these are clearly indicated by Hiller in his keyboard editions. Further examination, however, reveals that he composed a number of entirely new settings for the keyboard edition which leaves the authenticity of some

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1. Mus. MSS 1190 (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek). It is obvious from the different styles of writing that the MSS is the work of at least two people, viz. this is not an autograph.

numbers in the manuscript unresolved.

Comparison of the theatre manuscript with the keyboard edition of the music to Der Teufel (1770) reveals a number of these discrepancies, most of which, by a simple process of elimination, can be resolved. The following numbers in the theatre manuscript could be by either Standfuss or Hiller: No. 4 (ff. 8b-10), No. 13 (ff. 26-27b), No. 14 (ff. 28-30b), No. 16 (ff. 33b-36), No. 19 (ff. 41b-43), No. 21 (ff. 45-7), No. 24 (ff. 52b-54b) and No. 35 (ff. 84-6).

Reference to the source of the words provides a means of dating some of the compositions. In those cases where the songs were adapted from the French version the compositions must be by Hiller, since by the year 1766 Standfuss was already dead. Thus, numbers 4, 14, 21, 24 and 35, modelled on songs or scenes borrowed from Le diable à quatre, can only be products of Hiller's pen.

The song No. 13, Gewährt mir Ihr Götter, was set by Hiller and Standfuss. Fortunately, Hiller used Standfuss's setting of this song in his keyboard edition. His own version, song No. 13 in the manuscript, then appeared in the keyboard edition, but provided the music for the magician's song.

Song No. 19 is one of Weisse's 'new' songs but because it appears in an English section of the text it is impossible to say with certainty when the manuscript version was composed. The setting published in the keyboard edition, however, is a setting by Hiller.

This confusion is compounded by a misprint which appears in the foreword to the keyboard edition. Hiller informs his readers that four songs printed on pages 8, 20, 27 and 49 were new and had never been heard before. Again, comparison with the theatre manuscript reveals that the song printed on page 3 was, indeed, new. It appears neither in the manuscript version, nor in Weisse's text. Apart from this there were at least seven new settings of existing songs but only one of these agrees

with Hiller's foreword. These appear on pages 9, 25, 29, 34, 37, 42 and 66 in the edition.

#### F. Instrumentation

Hiller's orchestra, though small, included a surprising range of instruments. Apart from the usual string group which comprised first and second violins, viola and cello,<sup>1</sup> the score called for flutes, oboes, clarinets and bassoons. The latter are scored only for special effects in one or two of the songs, and it is most unlikely that they were used to reinforce the bass line, since Hiller is known to have preferred a small theatre orchestra. A pair of horns and two trumpets completed the ensemble.

During the years when Hiller had been active in preparing music for the Grosse Konzerte, he had drawn freely on the style of Johann Adolph Hasse, whose work he regarded as the best music written in the galant style. Thus, Hiller's writing for the theatre was much influenced by his own enthusiasm for this style of writing. As a result, most of his music is written in three parts and some of it is arranged in an open two-part texture, which makes frequent use of unisons. Thus in some of the songs the violins double the first part and the violas simply double the bass line at the octave. This gives rise to clear string textures. Otherwise Hiller, in common with Hasse, favoured the consonant style of writing built upon frequent progressions of thirds and sixths in the upper parts: this made the music easy to listen to, giving it superficial charm at the expense of harmonic interest. These simple harmonies were sustained by the long chord notes played on the horns. Interestingly enough, the score indicates that for the drinking songs, which include the loyal toast to the king, the horns were laid aside in favour of the

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1. The score indicates the use of a common bass line, viz. Basso. In common with the practice of the times, presumably this part would have been that from which the continuo-player also played and directed.

brighter ceremonial sound of the trumpets.

In spite of the range of instruments called for in the score, Hiller made sparing use of the woodwind, adding only one instrumental colour at a time to the ensemble for each of the songs. In general, he employed the timbre of the oboes and bassoons to songs for the male voice, flutes in songs for female voice, and clarinets were used more generally, being used in songs for either voice.

Hiller relied upon the woodwind instruments to supply appropriate colour to the music according to the demands or needs of each particular song. These were used in the conventional way, sometimes to double the melody, or to sustain the harmony notes in the lead phrases before adding their weight to the melody at the cadence points. A typical example is to be found in the introduction to the cook's song, for which Hiller includes a pair of oboes.<sup>1</sup> However, he broke with conventional woodwind writing for the comic songs. In these he used the chosen instrument to highlight an aspect of the comedy arising from the words, or to add to the buffoonery of the character on stage. The cook's song, in which Hiller employs a pair of oboes, provides examples of both styles. In the introduction they are used to sustain harmony and emphasise the cadence:<sup>2</sup>

Example (a)



In the second example, he uses the oboes to echo the passionate outbursts from the cook:<sup>3</sup>

1. See below, p. 183.

2. Mus. MSS 1190 (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek), No. 9, f. 19b.

3. Ibid., f. 20.

## Example (b)

Handwritten musical score for 'Ohne Lieb und ohne Wein' by Koch. The score is in 3/4 time and features four staves: Voice (Koch), Oboe (Ob.), Violin (Vi.), and Bass (Basso). The lyrics are written under the voice staff. The music is in G major and 3/4 time. The voice part has lyrics: 'O dürft ich sie, we willt ich sie.' The instrumental parts include a violin melody and a bass line. Dynamics like 'p' and 'f' are marked. There are also some handwritten annotations like 'Ob. 2' and 'Vi. 1+2'.

This method of writing, moreover, maintained the necessary balance between the ensemble and the voices, ensuring the clarity essential to this kind of music then so popular among the north German states.

This style proved to be an ideal vehicle for the new elements of compassion and sensibility that Weisse had introduced into the drama. Hiller, sensitive to these requirements, provided songs that deepened and extended his sentimental scenes, transforming Weisse's poetic forms into appropriate musical pieces. To this extent the basic song forms were largely dictated by the wishes of the author. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the case of the strophic songs where, to all intents and purposes, all that remained for the composer to supply was a good tune that would convey the general spirit or mood of the words and one that, hopefully, would linger in the mind of the audience. On this count there were no doubts: Hiller was successful in having a talent to compose memorable tunes, and he was equally adept at matching these with either character or situations.<sup>1</sup> Thus he made his reputation as one of the most influential composers of vocal music of his times. Indeed, one of these songs, Lene's Ohne Lieb und ohne Wein, made popular by the play's success but later supplied with more appropriate words, took on a new lease of life as a children's song, and found a place in the schools.

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1. Unterhaltungen (Hamburg, 1766), ii, p. 150.

### G. The strophic songs

The outstanding success of Lene's song Ohne Lieb und ohne Wein was the culmination of the general sentiments that Weisse introduced into the dialogue at this point of the play and the atmosphere generated by the action on stage. Hiller's delicate melody nicely complemented the mood of the scene, but much of the charm of this melody is only fully revealed when seen in relation to the action which precedes the song.

At this point in the action, the party guests are assembled in readiness for the festivities to begin when they are disturbed by a knock on the outside door. Much to Jobsen's annoyance, it is Lene. The guests, however, far from taking Jobsen's part, give Lene the kind of welcome that only a person of popular standing could expect to receive:<sup>1</sup>

Kellner.	Pfuy, Jobsen! ... Da Lenchen, trink eins mit uns!
Lene:	O lieber Jobsen! du siehst, sie bitten alle: wer wird den so unhöflich seyn===
Ein Bedienter.	Ja, Bruder Jobsen: ... deine Frau soll die Ballköniginn seyn.
Jobsen.	Ha, Gälschnabel! willst du mir etwa die Krone machen?
Alle.	Ja, Lenchen muss hier bleiben.
Kellner.	Ja, sie muss. Ich höre so gern singen, und ich weiss, Lenchen singt, wie ein Amselchen: sie muss mir eins singen -
Alle.	Ja, Lenchen muss ein's singen.
Jobsen.	Nu, weil's der Herr Bruder Kellner so haben will, so bedanke dich bey ihm, wenn ich dasmal ein Auge zudrücke.

With this, Jobsen delivers his song, written in simple 2/4 time. The style is a mixture of stentorian recitative and comic song, the music matching the mood of the action as Jobsen coaxes a very shy Lene out of her reluctance to sing in front of so many people.

The introduction to Jobsen's song is built out of two two-bar sections answered by a single descending four-bar phrase ending in a long

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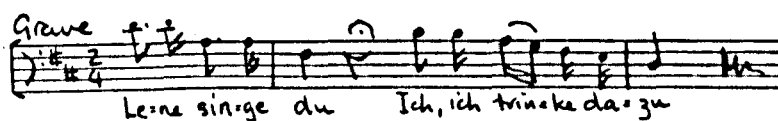
1. Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), p. 21.



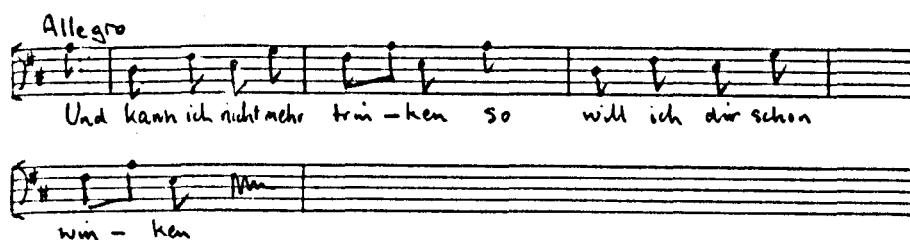
pause:<sup>1</sup>



Then, instead of giving Jobsen the opening phrase of his song following the melodic style of the introduction, Hiller substituted a two-bar section of recitative. Marking this section Grave, he gave the actor playing this part obvious scope to add gestures and act out a miniature episode pleading with Lene. This design affected a closer unity between the music and drama, more to be expected in the opera than in a play with additional music:<sup>2</sup>



Then, in the song which follows, Jobsen signals Lene to sing, upon which Hiller returns to the jollity of the opening Allegro, building the new melody out of the rising thirds of the opening motif of the introduction:<sup>3</sup>



This single eight-line stanza is set in an A B A B single verse form, in

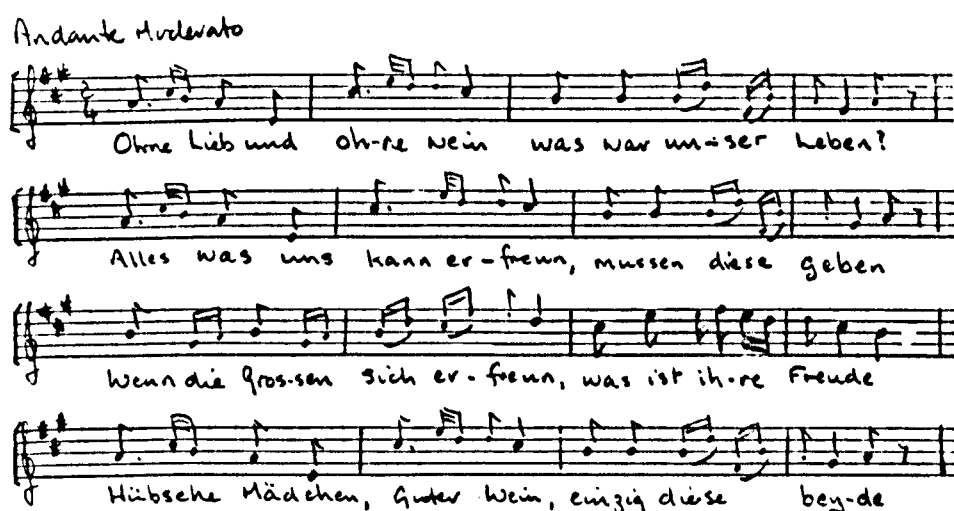
1. Hiller, Die verwandelten Weiber (Leipzig, 1770), p. 17.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.

which the recitative section makes up section A of the song. In keeping with convention Hiller modulated to the dominant key. Indeed, the key change is one of the events in the music, but provides only a brief departure from the tonic key of D major. The keyboard version is reduced from the manuscript which shows it to have been scored for strings, oboe, horns and continuo.

Jobsen's song at an end, he drinks a toast to Lene who, overcoming her shyness at last, sings her song which, again, catches the spirit of the action. Matching Lene's shyness, Hiller wrote a simple folk song setting in A A B A form, entirely in keeping with the status of the character.

In this instance the task of composition was made easier by Weisse's approach to the writing. His lines were short, containing four metrical feet with eight lines to each stanza. Hiller divided the lines into pairs which then provide the foundation for the musical structure. The scenes of riotous welcome are stilled by the imagery evoked by Lene's song in praise of the simple pleasures of life:<sup>1</sup>

*Andante Moderato*



Ohne Lieb und oh-re nein was war un-ser Leben?

Alles was uns kann er-freun, müssen diese geben

Wenn die Gros-sen sich er-freun, was ist ih-re Freude

Hübsche Mädchen, Guter Wein, einzig diese bey-de

1. Mus. MSS 1190 (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek), N. 11, ff. 22b-23.

The sentiments expressed in the song affect the mood of the scene as the party guests join in with the last two lines, by way of a chorus. This is one of the songs that reveals how effectively the new elements in the drama provided material for some profound sentimental musical episodes. At the same time these situations show the characters at their most vulnerable. It is at moments like these that Weisse and Hiller could lead their audience to share the feelings of sadness or joy portrayed on stage by the actors. Significantly, the technique owes much to the way that the Singspiel had already been influenced by means of the opera.

In this case Hiller had no second thoughts about the music and transcribed it almost note for note from the manuscript into his keyboard edition. For the performance in the theatre he exchanged the oboes used in the preceding song for a pair of flutes, intensifying the purity of the soprano voice. As a result, the song proved to be a most effective vehicle for the sentiments expressed in the words, and brought the scene to a satisfactory climax, winning the enthusiastic acclaim of the public.

Hiller made a very different use of this song form in the servants' scene (Act 1, Scene 3). This is the sequence of songs written in imitation of a vaudeville scene. These were sung by Lieschen and Hannchen, maids to Frau Liebreich, the cook and the butler.

The theatre manuscript demonstrates quite clearly that Hiller originally intended these to be a sequence of strophic songs. These were scored for the usual basic ensemble consisting of strings, horns and continuo. In addition, he added a pair of woodwind instruments which he changed according to the character of the song. Thus, in the songs scored for Lieschen and the cook he used a pair of oboes; for the butler's song he used the clarinets; while for Hannchen's song he used the flutes, with players doubling on instruments as required.

In general, the melodic line reflects the spirit of the words, while

the texture of the instrumental writing reveals the care with which he sought to highlight a particular comic aspect of the song, while at the same time retaining both clarity and balance.

The first of these songs, Ist das ein schön Gesicht, is sung by the maid, Lieschen. The words, referring to the way in which Frau Liebreich's face becomes distorted by anger, offered an opportunity for the actress playing the role to mimic the actions of her employer. Hiller makes very specific use of the oboe in this song to provide a suitable response, neatly echoing the singer's phrase:<sup>1</sup>

The line form of the first stanza carries a reference to Frau Liebreich's eyes flashing with anger - Gluth aus den Augen sprahet. At this point Hiller indulged in a little word-painting, changing the oboe motif accordingly into a rapidly ascending arpeggio:<sup>2</sup>

1. Mus. MSS 1190 (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek), No. 4, f. 8b.  
2. Ibid., No. 5, f. 11b.

Thus, in Lieschen's song caricature and burlesque come to the fore, and Hiller exploited this aspect of the humour in his accompaniment.

It is then the turn of the cook to boast of how he would cure Frau Liebreich of her faults. His 'cures', naturally enough, originate in his culinary skills, and in his song he boasts that he would roast her on a spit like a pike, then hang her up to smoke like a ham, but first of all he would wring her neck like that of a chicken. In the opening section of the song, Hiller uses the oboe to echo the cook's opening deliberations, but then turns to the violins to add colour to the imagery of the words:<sup>1</sup>



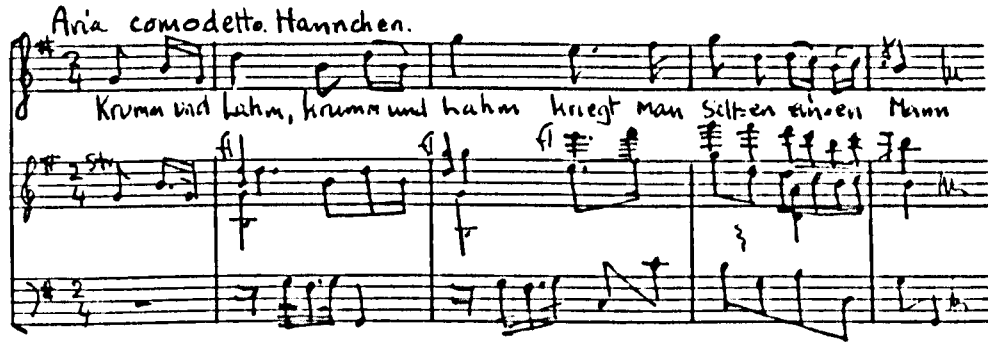
Similarly the butler, the master of the servants' quarters, sings of delivering the justice of the cellar. Hiller set this song in a jocular 6/8 rhythm. This, too, is one of Hiller's character pieces, and the music faithfully reflects the wine cellar atmosphere of its subject. To add to the general impression, he used clarinets to highlight the quirkiness of the rhythm:<sup>2</sup>

*Allegretto. Kellner.*

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid., No. 6, f. 14b.

Weisse wrote the lines of Hannchen's song in the form of a homily. In her song the maid reflects upon the truism that the crooked ways of the female and domestic strife rarely win men's hearts.

For this song Hiller composed a melody of simplicity and charm, using flutes both to enhance the melodic line and complement the female voice:<sup>1</sup>



Weisse's practice of writing stanzas for the lower characters containing only five or seven lines necessitated the repetition of one or more lines when Hiller came to write the music in order to preserve the balance of the phrases. Apart from this minor technical inconvenience, it is apparent that he went to great lengths in order to bring variety to this set of strophic songs, setting them as character pieces. In keeping with this design, he wrote each of the settings in a slightly different form:

Lieschen	A A <sup>1</sup> B A <sup>2</sup>
Koch (the cook)	A B C B <sup>1</sup>
Kellner (the butler)	A B C D
Hannchen	A B C

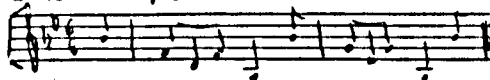
Clearly, introductions played an important part in preparing the audience for the song they were about to hear. They also served an important secondary purpose in bringing a sense of unity to the music.

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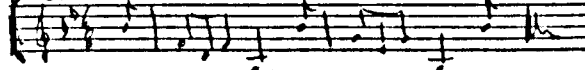
1. Ibid., N. 7, f. 14b.

In the case of the butler's song, for example, written in an A B C D form, the melody moves further and further away from the opening phrase. Hiller then brings the song to a satisfactory conclusion by re-introducing the short four-bar introduction to serve also as a coda:<sup>1</sup>

Butler's Song, Intro.



Coda



The scene in which the magician, Doctor Mikroskop, casts his spell provided Hiller with a further opportunity to compose the music for a memorable song that won immediate success. Discussion of this song, however, is beset with difficulties arising from the existence of two settings, one contained in the theatre manuscript, the second contained in the keyboard edition. Indeed, careful examination of the following evidence strongly suggests that Hiller's song - the version contained in the keyboard edition - was most probably never used in Koch's theatre.

#### H. The transformation music

The entire first scene of the second act is devoted to the magician's spell, in which he summons up his assistants from the spirit world to aid him in the transformation of the two women. For this portion of the text Weisse adopted a different style from most of the other songs; and instead of his more usual scheme, based upon iambic feet, he adopted a metrical scheme based on dactylic feet:<sup>2</sup>

Auf náht eúch, iŕr díénstbärrén Geístér hěrzú

Moreover, he laid these lines out in the text in a continuous sequence

1. Ibid., No. 6, f. 12b. See also ibid., f. 14.

2. Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), p. 40.

comprising ten couplets. The setting contained in the manuscript agrees with this version of the text, and reveals that the music which accompanied the casting of the spell took the form of a scena. The setting which resulted took the form of a recitative stromentato during which the string ensemble provided a suitable atmospheric accompaniment:<sup>1</sup>



It is also possible, given the fact that the numbers in the manuscript are not initialled, that this setting could be the work of Standfuss and had been retained from the earlier one-act version performed in 1752. Even if it was the work of Hiller, it would have been impractical, in any case, to have attempted to arrange such a difficult piece for domestic performance. In this instance he took the unusual course of dividing Weisse's lines into five four-line stanzas, and set them in the form of a strophic song, which he then included in his keyboard edition.

1. Mus. MSS 1190 (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek), No. 16, F. 33b.

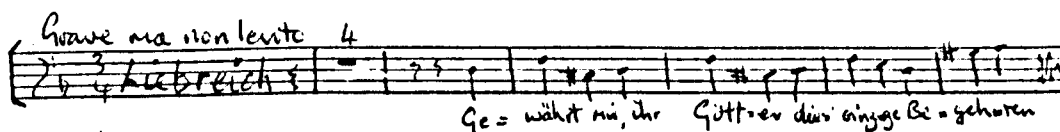


In this way he was able to satisfy the expectation of continuity demanded by those who bought the music, either as a result of seeing the play performed, or on the strength of its reputation.

The setting he composed was, in fact, an adaptation of one of his own arias, apparently laid aside in favour of a more popular setting by Standfuss. This was the song Grant me ye Pow'rs but one Request, translated by Weisse from The Devil to Pay for the one-act version of 1752. Fortunately, it shared a similar metrical scheme to the magicians's lines:<sup>1</sup>

Gewährt mir ihr Götter das éinz'gē Bēgéhren,  
Auf náht euch, ihr diénstbāren Geístēr hērzu.

which Hiller set to the following tune:<sup>2</sup>

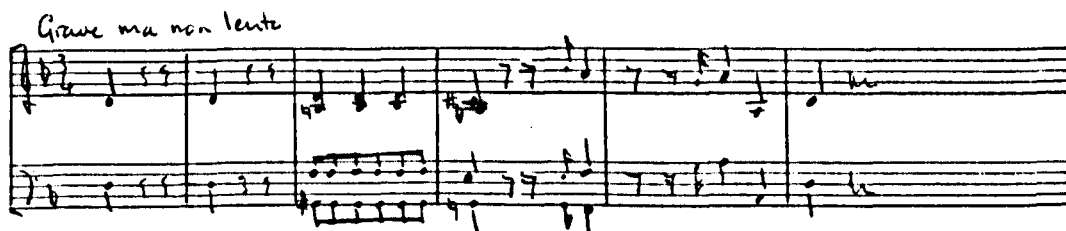


Interestingly enough, although Hiller's setting was never used, it reveals the completeness of his overall musical design, for he set these words Gewährt mir ihr Götter, sung by Liebreich, one of the two 'noble' characters in the play, in the form of a da capo aria.

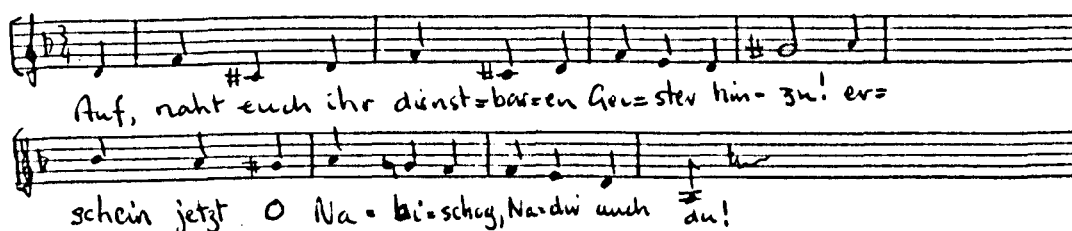
In spite of this apparent disparity : after a lapse of some four years Hiller adapted this tune for the magician's song. Indeed, the tune matched the mood and the words of the magician's song so well that to the listener it sounds like an entirely original setting. The minor key, his masterly use of the dramatic pause, and his uncharacteristic use of harmonic colour (in the form of diminished seventh chords) furnish the singer with a setting rich enough to ensure the success of the song in its own right.

1. Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), p. 40. See also p. 31.  
2. Mus. MSS 1190 (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek), No. 13, f. 26.

The introduction portrays the demonic content of the scene with admirable economy:<sup>1</sup>



The tune which had originally been intended for Liebreich's aria was adapted in the form of a sixteen-bar melody in A B form, entirely confined to its tonic minor key. Hiller's use of augmented intervals in the melodic line again captures the spirit of this moment in the play with great success:<sup>2</sup>



The success of this version of the song has completely eclipsed the fact that an earlier setting of Weisse's text is in existence. This is due to a number of circumstances, the most important being that this version was confined to a single manuscript that remained in private hands in Munich. As a consequence, the musicologists who began to evaluate the work of Hiller towards the end of the nineteenth century very likely did not know of its existence. At the same time, the printed keyboard edition appears so complete in itself as to be easily mistaken for an authentic copy of the music - transcribed for the keyboard in the

1. Hiller, Die verwandelten Weiber (Leipzig, 1770), p. 29.

2. Ibid.

in the same form as it had once been used in the theatre - especially since it had been edited and prepared for publication by the best possible authority to carry out this specialised task, namely, the composer himself. Yet the fact was that Hiller, to some extent, had unwittingly warned against such an eventuality, deliberately drawing attention to the fact that his keyboard edition contained several new songs that had never been heard before.<sup>1</sup> Yet, for a long time Hiller's contribution to German opera was assessed solely on the strength of the various keyboard editions, thereby confusing his contribution to German song with his work for the theatre.

In one or two cases special circumstances pertained which have led writers to give a slightly misleading impression of Hiller's theatre music. One of the foremost of these was the musicologist Georgy Calmus, and his work on early German Singspiel remains a useful source of information. The passage of time has revealed one or two inaccuracies that continue to be accepted at face value. One way in which these articles mislead the reader arises from the way Calmus sets out to appraise this particular song from Der Teufel. The song, as mentioned already, is interesting for it is the only example of a magical scene set by Hiller. However, some of the opinions advanced by Calmus, without the benefit of the theatre manuscript, are instructive:<sup>2</sup>

in the French parodies and operas of the times scarcely was an opportunity missed to include a magical transformation, or arias in which storms, or passions were the rule. These were illustrated by means of running passages, disjunct harmony, or tremolos.

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1. "In the provincial theatres few, or even none, of the new arias will be known, and in Koch's theatre many of the old arias are still sung." See Hiller, Die verwandelten Weiber (Leipzig, 1770), Foreword. As mentioned already, there is some ambiguity in Hiller's use of the word Arien - a term used to refer to more than one musical form.

2. Calmus, Die ersten deutschen Singspiele (Leipzig, 1908 (Wiesbaden 1973)), pp. 21-5.

He then goes on to describe Hiller's setting of the magician's song:<sup>1</sup>

Hiller [in Der Teufel] had only one single, definite, rather frightening situation to portray, that is precisely reflected in the short song, in which the magician summons up his spirits to transform the two women.

The juxtaposition of these two pieces of information appears to convey the impression that Hiller was writing in imitation of the opéras comiques though Calmus was careful not to commit himself too far in this direction. The notion was possibly the result of associating Hiller's theatre composition with Weisse's texts, which were frequently adaptations of opéras comiques, but this line of thought fails to take into account the loudly voiced objections of the Gottsched party during the 1750s. Then it was the Italian opera that was regarded as the perpetrator of offensive scenes of magic, which Gottsched believed would lower the standards of taste on the German stage.<sup>2</sup>

Calmus then goes on to describe the introduction to Hiller's setting of the song itself, quoting the keyboard edition as his source, apparently unaware of the connection between this melody and Hiller's setting of Liebreich's aria dating from 1766.

Had this additional information been available to him, his conclusions might have been very different. For example, if Hiller's version of Liebreich's aria had been used in performances given in the theatre then it is most unlikely that a composer of Hiller's standing would have used the same tune in a different context within the same play. Added to this was the fact that Hiller went to some trouble to avoid setting all of the strophic songs Weisse had written, preferring to combine verses and set them in one of the single verse forms. Moreover, Hiller's original setting of Lieschen's song Ist das ein schön Gesicht, described above, appears in a much altered form in the keyboard edition.

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1. Ibid., p. 21.

2. See above, p. 77.

This song provides a striking example of the way Hiller was inclined to combine verses in order to set them in a single verse form.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, given Hiller's view that strophic songs were simply too repetitive for use in the theatre, it seems uncharacteristic that he would then take the opposite course and create a song that his librettist had not supplied in the first place, and which required no less than five repetitions of the same music.

Calmus then goes on to discuss the ballet which followed, and which had so enraged Gottsched and his supporters. One of the sources he quoted was Wise Gottsched's Der kleine Prophet von Bömischbroda, even though this pamphlet had been published in 1753 in response to the one-act version of Der Teufel, with music by Standfuss: events pre-dating Hiller's song by nearly thirty years.<sup>2</sup>

Although it remains virtually impossible to decide this issue with certainty, it is possible in the light of existing evidence to suggest an altogether more probable course of events. For example, one version of the ballet to which Calmus refers must have accompanied the transformation scene in the one-act version of Der Teufel given in 1752. In the light of Weisse's literal translation of Coffey's old song, which must date from the 1752 version, it would appear that the scena included in the theatre manuscript dating from 1766 may also have been retained in the same form. Alternatively, Hiller may have prepared a fresh setting of Weisse's words without altering the layout of the text, but adopted a style and form closer to that of the opera.

Hiller's song version of this piece appears to have necessitated a

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1. Weisse's text shows both of these songs to have been written in strophic form: see Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), pp. 13, 51, and Hiller, Die verwandelten Weiber (Leipzig, 1770). Compare also Hiller's settings of Lieschen's song, p. 9, with the MSS f. 8b, and Lieschen's song on p. 37 in the keyboard edition.

2. Calmus, Die ersten deutschen Singspiele (Leipzig, 1908 (Wiesbaden, 1973)), p. 23.

small change to the text in addition to a re-arrangement of the lines to make up the five stanzas. In the play the spirits appear in answer to the magician's incantations, listen as he commands them first to convey Lene into Frau Liebreich's bed and then, likewise, to convey Frau Liebreich into Lene's bed in the cobbler's cottage. Weisse's text is very clear and precise over this aspect of the drama:<sup>1</sup>

Zauberer: Auf naht euch ihr dienstbaren Geister herzu!  
 Forschein' itzt, o Nabischog, Nadir auch du!  
 Die Zeit ist dringend, auf! ohne Verweilen!  
 Ich will euch geheime Befehle entheilen.  
 Dir Klarheit der Sonne verscheuchet euch nicht (5)  
 Der Mond verbirget sterbendes Licht!  
 Die Erde, bedeckt vom schwärzestens Flor,  
 Liegt tief im Schlaf, drum eilet hervor! -  
 (Die Geister erscheinen.)

Geister: Sprich, Herr! was wollen wir vollzieh'n?

Zauberer: Eh! noch Finsterniss Schattern entflieh'n, (10)  
 Sollt ihr zum Weiber des Schuster's hier wandeln,  
 Und sie in Liebreich's Gemalinn verwandeln:  
 Doch Liebreich's Gemalinn verwandelt dafür  
 In Lenen, das Weib des Schusters allhier:  
 Lasst sie die Erscheinung so mächtig bethören, (15)  
 Damit sie nicht wissen, wohin sie gehören:  
 Dann führt sie in einer bezaubendern Reich,  
 Dem Junker die Lene, und Jobsen die Edelfrau zu!  
 Und diese Betäubung den Nachdruck zu geben;  
 So lasst sich Sturm, Donner und Blitzen erheben. (20)  
 (Es donnert und blitzt.)

Given the atmosphere and drama of Weisse's scene, it is uncharacteristic of Hiller not to have taken the fullest opportunity to portray faithfully the drama of the setting or, at least, to re-arrange the existing version of this important scene. There is also, however, the question of the dancing.

Such a piece would need to provide music that would give the actors playing the parts of the spirits ample opportunity to engage in the kind of posture dancing that normally accompanied scenes like these at that time.<sup>2</sup> This would add to the spectacle and, at the same

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1. Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), pp. 40-1. See also Coffey's The Devil to Pay (London, 1731), pp. 12-13.

2. See Handel's Orlando (London 1733) which contains exactly such a scene in Act 1, Scene IX, Hallische Handel-Ausgabe (ed. S. Flesch) (London, 1969), vol. xxviii.

intensify the atmosphere on stage as the magician continued to deliver the lines of his recitative. Bearing in mind Hiller's predilection for the opera seria, this would in the circumstances seem to offer a more satisfactory explanation of these events. Moreover, given Gottsched's intense dislike of the Italian opera and especially scenes which portrayed the supernatural world as though it were real life, such a course of events might provide a better explanation of his violent tirade against the piece in 1752.<sup>1</sup> Certainly, a representation along these lines receives further support from a description of this scene as it was given in 1766. This was included in the annotated version of Weisse's text, published in 1880. The commentary which accompanies the transformation scene is instructive, for it includes a detailed description of the costumes worn by the actors:<sup>2</sup>

The furies, which the Gottsched party hated on principle, provided [Koch with] opportunity to engage in a cheap satire. They appeared [on stage] in formal dress wearing red stockings, red gloves, and with reddened faces. Also, they wore feathered head-dresses. The magician, also, wore formal dress, and appeared in a periwig, which surmounted tousled locks of gray hair.

Hiller's simple strophic song would scarcely have been adequate to have supported a production on such a scale. By contrast, the setting contained in the theatre manuscript provides a direct cue for the two spirits, Nabischog and Nadir, to join the magician on stage, accompanied

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1. See above, p. 80.

2. Weisse (ed. Minor), Deutsche national-litteratur, historische kritische Ausgabe (Berlin und Stuttgart, 1882-89), see Bd 72.

This was an unmistakable satirical reference to one of Gottsched's most worthwhile theatre reforms, namely, that actors should adopt costumes appropriate to the characters they portrayed on stage, giving an added element of realism to the drama. Intriguingly, a satire of a similar kind had been given by Frau Neuber during a production of Gottsched's tragedy, Cato. Relations between Gottsched and Frau Neuber had cooled to the point where she acted out the third act of the tragedy, with Koch playing the title role, treating the subject as a low comedy. This episode took place in 1739, and a full account appears in Blümner's Geschichte des Theaters Leipzig (Leipzig, 1818), pp. 66-70.

by their furies. Of course, no such cue is given in Hiller's song version: a circumstance entirely befitting a song especially included in the keyboard edition for the benefit of the amateur musician, and which was prepared not in 1766 but four years later in 1770.

In other respects, the two versions of the music are much more compatible, even though they reveal that Hiller engaged in a considerable amount of editing during the preparation of his keyboard edition of the music. Many of the pieces suffered minor alterations and, indeed, in some cases he preferred to write entirely new settings for some of the songs.

#### I. Songs to accompany action

Musical interest of a different kind was provided by the songs conceived as an integral part of a specific piece of stage action. The most attractive of the two examples contained in the play centres upon the episode in which Lene experiments with snuff. There are two versions of this song, both by Hiller. The first of these was composed for the 1766 production; the second version seems to have been composed expressly for inclusion in the keyboard edition. For the theatre version Hiller used the basic ensemble: strings, horns and continuo, to which he added a pair of clarinets.

The fact that the song is so closely integrated with the action places additional emphasis on the interplay between the words and music. Indeed, the performance of the song takes up almost the whole of the scene. This was inserted by Weisse, after the example of Sedaine, to use Lene's display of self-assurance, giving the character greater conviction.

At this point in the play, Frau Liebreich has just driven the guests from her house. Lene, arriving home alone, comes to the realisation that Jobsen has gone to the ale-house and she finds herself unable to resist



the temptation:<sup>1</sup>

Lene: Unfehlbar, ist mein Zeckel noch in die  
Schenke gelaufen ... Ich muss geschwind,  
weil ich noch allein bin, einmal Schnupf-  
tabak nehmen ... Ich weiss nicht, seit mir's  
mein Mann verboten hat ...

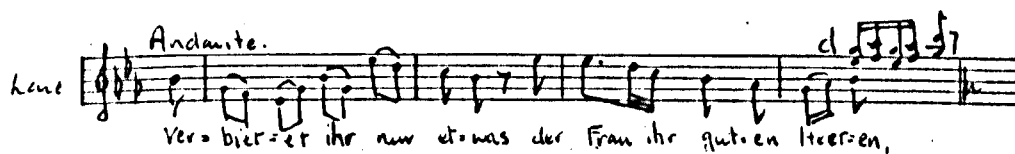
Thus, in the midst of her doubt, Lene begins her song, which nicely chal-  
lenges accepted attitudes to women in the battle of the sexes:<sup>2</sup>

Lene: Verbiestet nur etwas der Frau, ihr guten  
Herr'n!

The apparent sincerity expressed in the opening lines of the scene  
found an echo in Hiller's music. His introduction, set in simple time,  
sets an imposing mood which is interrupted at the cadence point by a  
triplet figure played by the clarinets: an instrument Hiller seems to  
have used for comic effect:<sup>3</sup>



Lene's melody contains the usual elements of sensibility and delicacy  
which were a normal part of the exchanges between the sexes at that time.  
Nevertheless, the humour of the situation is never far away, and Hiller's  
use of the clarinetts turns the word 'Gentlemen' almost into a term of  
derision, giving a comic emphasis to Lene's feelings of resentment at  
that point of her song:<sup>4</sup>

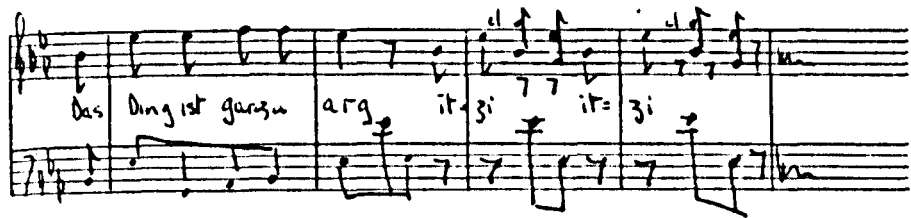


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1. Weisse, *Der Teufel* (Leipzig, 1777), p. 32 (Act 1, Scene 10). See also Sedaine, *Le diable à quatre* (Paris, 1830), p. 146 (Act 1, Scene II).
  2. Weisse, *Der Teufel* (Leipzig, 1777), p. 32.
  3. Mus. MSS 1190 (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek), No. 14, f. 28.
  4. *Ibid.*, f. 28b.

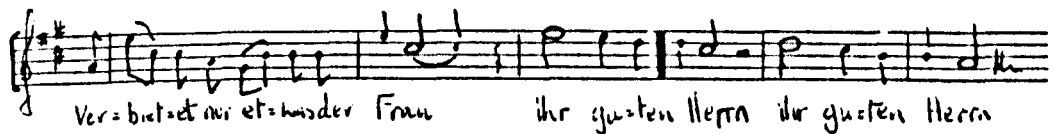
In spite of this early promise of impending emancipation, Lene's daring experiment with this forbidden pleasure turns into a moral lesson when she discovers the unpleasant consequences of her actions:<sup>1</sup>

Lene: Er beisst doch  
Das Ding ist garzu arg.

Lene's obvious displeasure provides a convenient reassurance to the gentlemen that all is well with the world, and the song ends amid Lene's fit of sneezing: neatly echoed by the orchestra:<sup>2</sup>



The song gave Hiller a first-rate opportunity to compose a setting that explored both Lene's innermost thought and feelings, and her physical reaction to the effects of the tobacco. Not surprisingly, it seems to have been well received in the theatre. Yet he was so dissatisfied with this song that he went so far as to re-set the entire first half of the music, retaining only the 'sneezing chorus'. So that the version published in the keyboard edition four years after the production bears little or no resemblance to the version contained in the theatre manuscript of 1766:<sup>3</sup>



Closer study of the two versions reveals that the most probable cause of Hiller's dissatisfaction sprang from his approach to the task of setting Weisse's words. In the earlier version contained in the manuscript and shown in the example above, Hiller had composed a most

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1. Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), p. 33.
  2. Mus. MSS 1190 (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek), No. 14, f. 30.
  3. Hiller, Die verwandelten Weiber (Leipzig, 1770), p. 25.

pleasing melodious setting of the words. Although this was satisfying enough to please the ear it detracted, perhaps, from its main function of underpinning the sense of the words for the added appreciation of the audience. Further examination of this setting reveals that the first phase of the melody was repeated, but accompanied a different line in the text.

Comparison of the two settings reveals that in the newer version of the song contained in the keyboard edition Hiller carefully avoids this possibility by the simple expedient of dividing the lines into sections, and setting each of the sections to an appropriate melody. Thus, the final version is composed in the form of a through-composed song in which the 'sneezing chorus' forms just one of the sections.

#### J. Hiller's use of the arietta

The new interest which Weisse demonstrated in the character of Lene led him to reveal the emotions she felt as a result of the insensitive treatment she received at the hands of Jobsen. Hiller's skill in matching these demands with suitable music was shown to its best advantage in the setting he composed for Lene's song, Immer Bier und Branntewein. In this piece he combined words and music to convey a vivid impression of her distress.

Lene's song arises as a result of Jobsen's opening song in which he declares that women should be beaten every day to keep them in their proper place:<sup>1</sup>

Vergess auch nicht, mit jedem Tage  
Sie zehnmal, zehnmal durch zu blauern.

At this point in the play Weisse inserted a new section into the text, allowing Lene to answer this outrageous assertion:<sup>2</sup>

Lene: Ja, ja, wir armen Weiber sind immer  
Sklavinnen der Männer.

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1. Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), p. 6.

2. Ibid.

She then delivers her song, vividly describing the situation which she is forced to endure, and the lot of women who share her position.

In setting this song Hiller adopted a more conventional approach, dividing the seven lines of the stanza into two sections according to the sense of the words. These he then set in the form of a simple but effective arietta. He set the first two lines in a brisk two-beat tempo and used them as the basis for the A section of the arietta. The broken melodic line, in the major key, is drawn to echo Jobsen's imperious demands for beer in a manner more in keeping with the beer-cellar than the home:<sup>1</sup>

Aria 2  
non troppo

In the music for the second section the mood changes abruptly, and to match this change of mood Hiller adopted a slower three-beat time, setting the melody in the tonic minor.<sup>2</sup> The intensity of the music is further deepened by his use of suspensions and diminished sevenths, vividly portraying Lene's feelings of wretchedness at her position and her commiserations with those unfortunate enough to share the unhappiness

1. Mus. MSS 1190 (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek), No. 2, f. 4.

2. Ibid. Weisse had already won a reputation for writing sensitive poetry and the lines of the stanza contain some effective, if simplistic, images of sensibility that occur in the play.

Immer Bier und Branntwein	)	
Muss den Herrn zu Diensten seyn:	)	A
Aber wir	)	
Sitzen hier,	)	
Dürfen uns niemals erfreuen:	)	B
Und wenn wir darüber schrey'n;	)	
Weh uns armen Weiberlein! -	)	

of her position:<sup>1</sup>

Handwritten musical score for a song, marked "Lento". The score is for four parts: Lene (Soprano), Ob (Oboe), Vlns (Violins), and Contr. (Contrabass). The lyrics are "Und wenn wir da-rüb-er Schrey'n, Und wenn wir da-rüb-er Schrey'n,". The music is in a minor key with a 3/4 time signature.

The version of this song contained in the manuscript reveals that Hiller *not only* used the basic ensemble but also added the oboes to complement the plaintive mood of the song. In this respect his use of harmonic colour reinforced by the minor key to highlight the imagery of the stanza were very effective. Moreover, Hiller's rare satisfaction with his work is reflected in his transcription of the song which appears in the keyboard edition. Apart from a small amount of editorial work, happily, the music survived almost unchanged.

A challenge which put Hiller's creative powers to a rather different test was provided by another of the songs that Weisse adapted from Sedaine's Le diable à quatre. The song in question occurs during the second act after the issue of the first battle of wills has been settled, leaving Jobsen master of the domicile. Finally, with the dawn breaking and having set Frau Liebreich to her task of spinning thread, Jobsen sets to work in his stall cobbling shoes. Feeling better after winning this major victory, he feels better pleased with the world but, nevertheless, takes the precaution of delivering a further warning to his wife:<sup>2</sup>

Jobsen: Nu Rabenaas wirst du dich bald geben? -  
siehst du Ich habe noch Faüste,

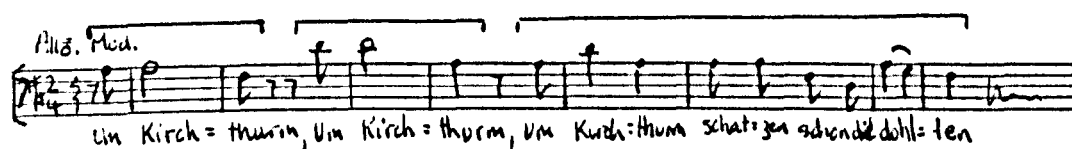
With this he sets to work, singing as he does so, to amuse himself. Perhaps inspired by the dawn breaking, his song consists of his own selection from the dawn chorus.

1. Mus. MSS 1190 (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek), No. 2, f. 6.  
2. Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig 1777), p. 56 (Act 2, Scene IV).

The subject of the song provided the composer with splendid opportunity to capitalise on natural bird calls, arranging the music so that the theatre ensemble imitated the cries of those individual birds which comprise the greater part of the nine-line stanza which follows:<sup>1</sup>

Um Kirchthurm schwatzen schon die Dohlen,  
 Krakrakakra,  
 Hahahaha!  
 Es kräht der Halm kikrikikri,  
 Wihihihi!  
 Der Kuckguck ruft Cucu, Cucu,  
 Ich aber flicke Schuh:  
 Was fehlt mir noch darzu?  
 Glugluglugluglu.

Hiller divided the stanza into four sections, each one arising out of its allotted bird call. The opening melodic line is set in a major key in two-beat time, marked allegro moderato. It contains many of the distinguishing features of buffa melody: a typical motif built out of the notes of the tonic chord and repeated in different inversions. The resulting tension is released in the quicker section that follows the opening phrase:<sup>2</sup>



In spite of the subject of the song, the theatre manuscript indicates that Hiller employed the same instrumentation as for many of the other songs, so that the ensemble comprised the usual strings, horn and continuo with the additional support of the oboes.

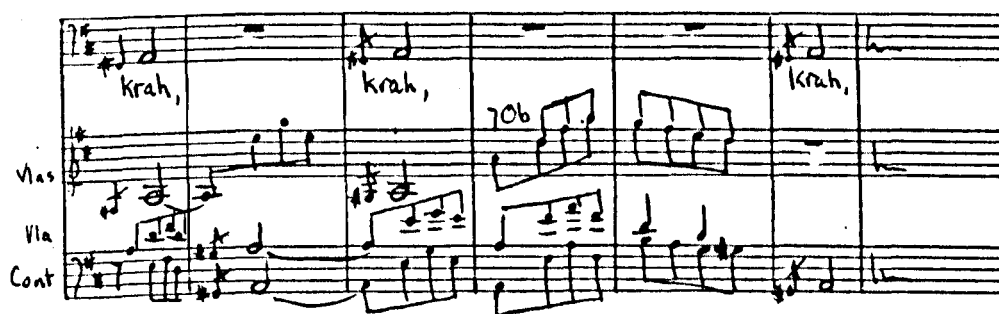
On the one hand, this is only to be expected since the song is for the male lead character in the play. On the other hand, the variety of bird calls indicated by the text offers such a magnificent opportunity to exploit the various colours of the woodwind instruments that it is surprising to find that Hiller did not make more of this aspect of the

1. *Ibid.*, p. 56. See also Sedaine, Le diable à quatre (Paris, 1830), p. 166 (Act 2, Scene IV).

2. Mus. MSS 1190 (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek), No. 23, f. 49.

music. Even assuming that there were only two woodwind players available to him, this would have been sufficient to have employed at least two instruments and, possibly, all four during the course of the song. Despite these possibilities, Hiller preferred to keep faith with his over-all scheme of instrumentation. Though the results were not as dramatic as they might have been, the effect was very entertaining, and must have given much pleasure to the audience. Certainly Hiller's arrangement offered the actor playing the role of Jobsen plenty of scope to perform the song with appropriate stage action.

A good example is provided with each of the bird calls, the first of which is supplied by the cawing of the jackdaws. Their cry is represented musically by the strings with the oboes, surprisingly, relegated to their normal function and serving to reinforce the cadence points:<sup>1</sup>



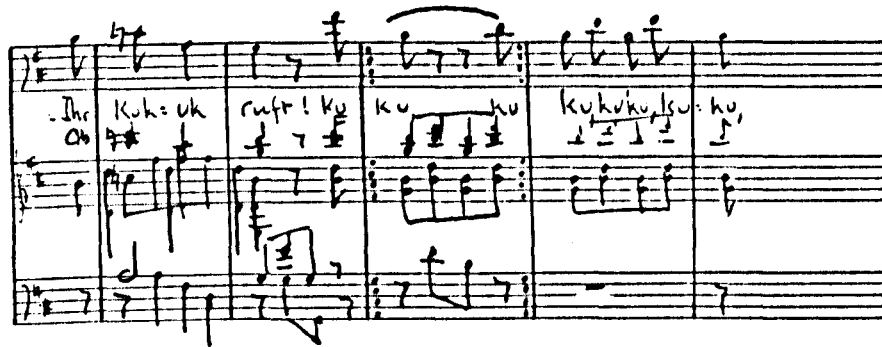
The song next calls upon Jobsen to assume the character of the cockerel. For this part of the song Hiller duly provided a musical adaptation of cock-crow. Instead of the polished and stylised motif that he might have been expected to write for use in the theatre, Hiller supplied a realistic representation of the cockerel's full-blooded greeting to the dawn. At the same time, however, he left the singer to provide the colour necessary for a proper performance of this welcome to the day, supported only by a single oboe at the cadence point in the usual way:<sup>2</sup>



1. Mus. MSS 1190 (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek), No. 23, f. 49b.

2. Ibid., No. 23, f. 50-50b.

Hiller arranged the music for the cuckoo call around its characteristic falling third, with the ensemble echoing each repetition of Jobsen's cuckoo call. In fact, Hiller so arranged matters that at this point of the song the sequence could be repeated at will by the repeat bar, and raises the added possibility that the device was included to provide the actor playing Jobsen's role to indulge the audience in some spontaneous stage business:<sup>1</sup>



This hilarious sequence is finally brought to a close with Jobsen convinced he is about to turn into a pigeon. Again, his bird call motif is accompanied by the ensemble, and Hiller uses the plucked strings to echo Jobsen's repeated calls:<sup>2</sup>



This song provides a good illustration of the way Weisse re-worked many of the ideas he borrowed from Sedaine. In this case, the scene was re-worked and then incorporated into the drama in such a way that it is scarcely possible to recognise the original.

In the corresponding scene in Le diable à quatre (Act 2, Scene III), Jacques merely refers to the marquise as a nightingale - a double

1. Ibid., f. 50b.

2. Ibid., f. 51.



entendre in French, meaning both the songbird and a troublesome baggage. These lines appear to have been sung in the French version though, if this was the case, the air is not indicated:<sup>1</sup>

Rossignolet du bois  
Rossignolet sauvage.

This scene was freely adapted by Weisse, giving rise to the episode in which Jobsen delivers his comic bird song. Weisse also borrowed the ensuing scene, but this was used in its original form. It contains a song in which Jobsen declares that there is no pleasing his wife. When she quarrels with him, no matter what he does she tells him to go to the devil; if he holds his peace, then she falls to beating him: Das eine Frau sich mit dem Manne zankt.<sup>2</sup>

Hiller set this six-line stanza in the form of an arietta: the A section set in the major and the B section, with its imagery of domestic strife, is set in the tonic minor. This song exactly matches the form and style of Lene's arietta Immer Bier und Branntwein mentioned above.

#### K. Hiller's use of aria form

The action then moves to Liebreich's house where Lene wakes up to find herself surrounded by luxury. At this point in the play Weisse combined his translation of the scene from The Devil to Pay with the song from the corresponding scene in Le diable à quatre.

As with so many of Weisse's scenes he arranges the text in such a way that the song appears to arise, almost as a matter of course, out of the preceding dialogue. In fact the dialogue was retained from the English original, and the song freely adapted from the French version.

The scene which opens the third act reveals Lene waking up in her strange new surroundings. She recalls dreaming of being in heaven,

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1. Sedaine, Le diable à quatre (Paris, 1830), p. 166.

2. Ibid., p. 167. See also Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), p. 77: Hiller, Die verwandelten Weiber (Leipzig, 1770), p. 42.

lying in a bed of clouds and roses. Then as she becomes more aware of her surroundings, she begins to notice the objects around her:<sup>1</sup>

Lene: ...Ey! was für schöne Manschetten! === der  
schöne Spiegel! === die schönen Stühle! ===  
die schönen Wände! ===

Das ist der Himmel sicherlich!  
Wo kriegt' ich sonst so schöne Sachen?  
O lass doch, guter Himmel, mich  
Nicht wiederum erwachen! ===  
Die schönen Bilder an der Wand, (5)  
Die schönen Bänder um die Hand, ===  
Ich glaube gar, es heisst Geschmeide! ===  
Das Bett und diese Rock von Seide!  
Und dies ist alles, alles mein?  
Gewiss, das muss der Himmel seyn! (10)

Hiller's setting of Weisse's text is remarkable for both its scale and its formal layout. Once more examination of the two versions of the music reveals that Hiller composed the original, contained in the manuscript, for the theatre production in 1766. Later, in 1770, he prepared a simplified version for inclusion in the keyboard edition. Thus, as in the case of the magician's song or, for example, Jobsen's bird song, there is a considerable difference between the two versions, reflecting the very different circumstances for which they were intended.

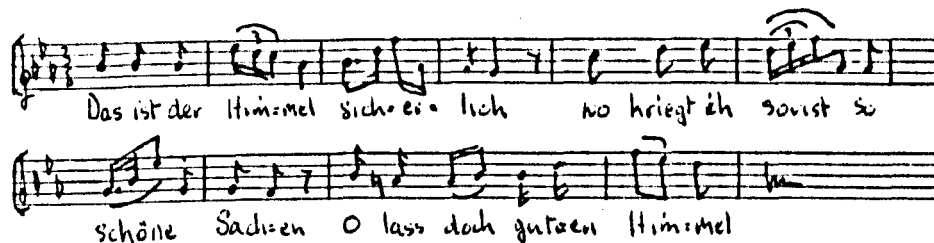
For the theatre production Hiller needed to compose a setting to match the drama of Weisse's scene. Besides this fundamental requirement, the stanza contained obvious direct allusions to the magnificence of the stage design and to the transformation of Lene's appearance - her humble cottage 'rags' now replaced with rich silk, her hands adorned with fine jewelry. Then, finally, comes the realisation that, according to the doctor's prediction, these are now her own things.

Accordingly Hiller divided the text into three sections and set them in the form of a da capo aria. Thus the first four lines of the stanza underpin Lene's first moments of wonder as she awakes amid her new surroundings. Hiller set this part of the text to a fine melody, designed

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1. Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), pp. 58-9.

both to support and sustain the drama at this point. This he achieved by repeating some of the phrases. The real descriptive power of the music lay in its style, for Hiller employed the refined strains of a courtly minuet to accompany Lene's social transformation. Set in the key of E flat major, the music is marked Gratioso ma non troppo:<sup>1</sup>



Hiller's use of the minuet style, with its associations, helped to deepen the atmosphere already created by the sumptuous stage decoration clearly demanded by this scene. His instrumental arrangement for strings, horns and continuo with the added brilliance of the clarinets added significantly to the overall effect:<sup>2</sup>

Das ist der Himmel sich erlich

Hiller set the next two lines in the form of a separate piece, but which also forms the B section of the aria:<sup>3</sup>

Die schönen Bilder an der Wand,  
Die schönen Bänder um die Hand,

Hiller then repeated these lines as necessary in order to complete the middle section of the aria, which was written in two contrasting sections: A B. The completed middle section could then also stand as a separate arietta devoted to portraying Lene's state of mind. The repetition of the lines helped to satisfy the underlying drama regarding Lene's

1. Mus. MSS 1190 (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek), No. 25, ff. 55-55b.

2. Ibid.

3. Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), pp. 58-9.

confusion at waking up amid such strange surroundings. Moreover, Hiller added to this impression by means of the music. The accompaniment also consists of a repetition of the same lines, the only example of a contrapuntal accompaniment in the entire work. Thus Lene's confusion of spirit is mirrored in Hiller's confusion of sound:<sup>1</sup>

Allegro.

Cl. Die schönen Bilder an der Wand, die schönen Bänder

Viol.

Viol.

Contr.

Hiller set the last four lines of the stanza to a modified version of the opening music.<sup>2</sup> The return of the courtly music which accompanies these lines - particularly the one expressing Lene's realisation that all she could see belonged to her - once again symbolises Lene's social advancement.

The result of Hiller's painstaking work is a da capo aria of the more modern kind in which the music is repeated but not the text - in this instance a variation of the da capo accompanies the last four lines of text. By setting Weisse's stanza without any repetition of the opening lines Hiller was able to maintain the general progress of the action. Thus, he used one of the most expansive musical forms of the times to reveal to his audience the depth of Lene's emotional turmoil. At the same time, Hiller avoided the worst excess of the opera seria where the repeated section is treated by the singer as an opportunity to indulge his talent for improvisation and embellishment at the expense of the drama. Significantly, Hiller's skill in composing music of character, undoubtedly aided by his long-standing interest in music for the stage,

1. Mus. MSS 1190 (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek), No. 25, f. 56b.

2. Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), p. 58:

Ich glaube gar, es heisst Geschmeide! ==  
 Das Bett und diese Rock von Seide!  
 Und dies ist alles, alles mein?  
 Gewiss, das muss der Himmel seyn!

enriched the scenes of drama created by Weisse and added considerable interest to the spectacle.

Surprisingly, perhaps, this aria appeared in the keyboard edition in a much altered form; for when Hiller came to transcribe this piece his alterations went far beyond the need to simplify the music for the benefit of the amateur musician of the day. He combined the first and last sections of the aria into a single arietta in two sections: A and A<sup>1</sup>, and placed this in front of the existing arietta that had formerly served as the B section of the old aria. He then re-arranged the ten lines of the stanza so that they ran through both pieces. Thus Hiller's final arrangement of this piece created an aria in the form of two distinctly separate movements, which were then performed without a pause: A A<sup>1</sup> B.

#### L. The Finale

The Devil to Pay ended amid scenes of celebration, including dancing as the servants gathered to share their employers' good fortune, and singing as the main characters delivered their final chorus. Sir John, his wife and Jobson each sang a solo verse drawing attention to some of the moral points to be drawn from the scenes the audience had just witnessed:<sup>2</sup>

A I R XVI. Hey Boys up go we.



Lady. *Let ev'ry Face with Smiles appear,  
Be Joy in ev'ry Breast,  
Since from a Life of Pain and Care,  
We now are truly blest.*

Sir John. *May no Remembrance of past Time  
Our present Pleasures soil,  
Be nought but Mirth and Joy a Crime,  
And Sporting all our Toil.*

1. Hiller, Die verwandelten Weiber (Leipzig, 1770), pp. 45-7. See also Appendix V for a comparative sample of finales.

2. Coffey, The Devil to Pay (London, 1731), p. 30.

Job. *I hope you'll give me leave to speak,  
If I may be so bold;  
There's naught but the Devil, and this good Strap  
Could ever tame a Scold.*

# F I N I S.

Though not the most memorable poetry, and allied to one of the less appealing of the ballad tunes, the music was sufficiently bolstered by the atmosphere on stage to provide the conventional happy ending expected of an entertainment of this kind.

When this piece was staged in Germany, it is almost certain that von Borcke retained Coffey's finale more or less in the same form. Equally, there is no reason to suppose that Weisse changed it when he first translated the piece in 1752. This probable course of events receives a measure of support from the fact that when Weisse expanded the sequel, The Merry Cobler, for the Schuh'sche theatre company in 1767, his concluding scene remained faithful to the English original.<sup>1</sup>

Sedaine, however, in his version of Coffey's piece, Le diable à quatre, chose to discard the English-style finale in favour of an ending more in keeping with the French theatre tradition, and while its dramatic function remained the same, the presentation took a very different form.<sup>2</sup>

For example, in Sedaine's closing scene the marquis and his wife made their exit before the final music began leaving Jacques, Margot and Père Ambroise, the blind musician, with their guests to enjoy their celebrations in peace. These closing festivities were then led by Jacques, who promptly invited Père Ambroise to have a drink. The musician accepts, but before he is served the company begin their song, obliging him to accompany them. Their song takes the form of the usual chanson en ronde,

1. This was perhaps surprising when it is remembered that Weisse had already adopted the vaudeville finale for Der Teufel with success.

2. Sedaine, Le diable à quatre (Paris, 1830), pp. 138-40. See also Appendix V, pp. 476-8.

and at the end of each verse Père Ambroise's request for his drink is submerged as the singers once more take up the refrain, obliging him to continue playing and encouraging the public to join in with them. This is followed immediately by a second piece written in the same form, but intended as a solo for the main character to leave the audience with their customary 'curtain piece'. This provided the model upon which Weisse based his own finale for the expanded version of Der Teufel.<sup>1</sup> There were, however, significant differences between the two.

For example, whereas in the French version Sedaine wrote the 'noble' characters out of the finale, Weisse took the opposite course, keeping Liebreich and his wife on stage to welcome back the returning village guests and extend to them the hospitality of their house.<sup>2</sup> Then in the first of the two songs which make up the finale Weisse, unlike Sedaine, gives each of the lower characters a solo verse pointing out a moral to be learned from the action of the play. At this point Liebreich and his wife make their exit, leaving their guests not so much to begin, as to continue their celebrations.

As they leave Andreas, the blind fiddler, demands a drink, but the company force him to play for them as they begin their final chorus, Der Teufel ist ein böser Mann. Again, each character sings a solo verse pointing out something to be learned from the scenes of the play, always ending with a repetition of the chorus which drowns Andreas' request for a drink, and encouraging the German audience to try the novel experience of joining in with the singing on stage.<sup>3</sup> The last of the solo verses was delivered by the main characters, Jobsen and Lene, in the form of a curtain piece:<sup>4</sup>

Jobsen und Lene: Behaupten kritische Korsaren,  
Der Teufel sey in die gefahren,

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1. Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), pp. 95-101.

2. Ibid.

3. Weisse, Selbstbiographie (Leipzig, 1808), pp. 102-3.

4. Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), p. 101.

Die unsern nicht verschmäh'n:  
O widerlegt die Splitterrichter  
Durch Beyfall, freundliche Gesichter,  
Und kommt, ihn oft zu sehn.

The rondo then ends with a last repetition of the chorus, once more obliging Andreas to play for them. Thus once again Weisse took the opposite course and made use of Sedaine's joke, not to lighten the opening song of the finale, but to sustain the atmosphere of jollity and maintain the pace of the comedy during the final moments of the play.

Sedaine, as mentioned already, wrote Le diable à quatre before the querelle des bouffons in 1752 which coincided with the emergence of opéra comique as a separate entertainment. This is reflected in the way Sedaine mixed scenes of vaudeville with scenes of the up-and-coming opéra comique, in which the ariettes were composed to meet the special demands of the drama. Even at that time the vaudeville finale was already a well-established convention, serving the practical purpose of assembling the company on stage in readiness for the curtain call. In the case of The Devil to Pay, however, this was already written into the action, and raises the question of why Sedaine felt it necessary to remove two of the principal characters from the closing scene of the play. One possible reason lies in the special significance the vaudeville held for Parisians. Originally it had been a low form of entertainment. Le diable à quatre, however, was written at a time when the vaudevilles had discarded much of their vulgarity. Nevertheless, there remains a possibility that Maitre Jacques' chanson en ronde was considered suggestive enough to merit the absence of the play's 'noble' characters:<sup>1</sup>

Maitre Jacques:	Un petit coup de malheur	)	
	Est souvent un avantage;	)	
	Un petit coup de malheur	)	[chorus]
	Est souvent un grand bonheur.	)	
	Chacun evitoit ses yeux,		
	Mais dans le fond d'un bocage,		[verse 2]
	Un petit coup, etc.		
	Le fils du carillonneur		
	La poursuivit sous l'ombrage.		

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1. Sedaine, Le diable à quatre (Paris, 1830), p. 189.



Thus, when the marquis and his wife took their leave of the players (and the audience) it seems that the celebrations which followed may have been bawdier than the printed version suggests, and seems out of step with the foregoing scenes. On the other hand, this endpiece served to provide the main comic character with a most effective 'curtain piece'. Weisse, however, adapted Sedaine's finale with some care, altering the order of events and integrating the whole episode more completely with the foregoing scenes of the play.

During his stay in Paris during 1759-60, Weisse saw many of the more modern opéras comiques performed by Madame Favart and her company; and in his account of these visits to the theatre he drew particular attention to the delight he found in these performances.<sup>1</sup> Some years later he translated a number of these pieces, adapting them for the German stage. One of these, Annette et Lubin, in conjunction with another piece of Weisse's adaptation, formed the basis of Die Liebe auf dem Lande.<sup>2</sup> Comparison of the final scenes with that of Der Teufel reveals a surprisingly close similarity, which strongly suggests that when Weisse adapted Sedaine's old vaudeville finale he recast it in the style of the more modern opéra comique and, moreover, that he used as his model the divertissement from Annette et Lubin, or another just like it.

In common with Der Teufel, Favart's opéra comique ends with two final songs. These are written in the usual form of chanson en rond but, instead of providing a curtain piece for the main character, all of the characters are given solo verses in each of the songs.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the suggestive verses of the old vaudevilles are replaced by the idealised virtues of innocence which Weisse treated with equal caution.<sup>4</sup> More

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1. Weisse, Selbstbiographie (Leipzig, 1806), p. 104.

2. Favart, Oeuvres choisies de Favart (Paris 1812), 3 vols. See II, p. 128 "Annette et Lubin". See also Weisse, Komische Opern (Leipzig, 1777), 3 vols. See I, p. 105, "Die Liebe auf dem Lande".

3. Favart, Annette et Lubin, (Paris, 1812), pp. 128-31.

4. Ibid.

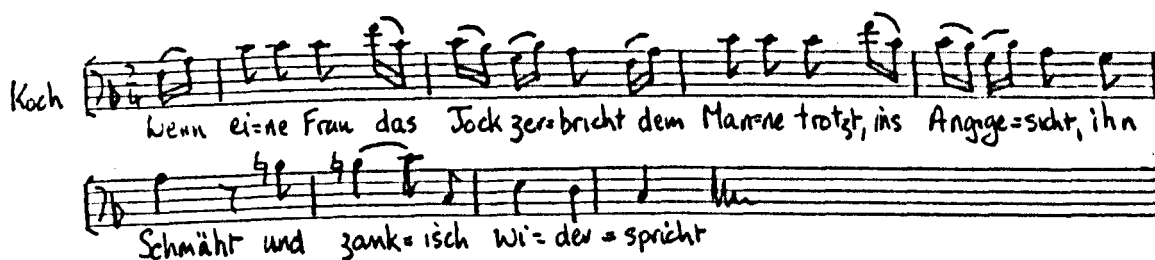
significantly, only the last verse of the second song, shared by both main characters, is used as the traditional curtain piece:<sup>1</sup>

Lubin: Lubin à son mariage  
Vous invite son façon.

Annette: Venez voir notre ménage,  
Comme amis de maison:  
Pour nous quel bonheur s'apprête.  
Si de nous vous faites cas!  
Ah!  
Il n'est point de fête  
Quand vous n'en êtes pas.

This is almost identical with the form of the two final songs in Der Teufel. The subject matter of Weisse's songs remains faithful to the moral purpose of the drama, and each of the verses contains a moral point drawn from the earlier scenes of comedy.<sup>2</sup>

According to the theatre manuscript, Hiller wrote the first of these in the style of a vaudeville, in which the butler, Hannchen, Lieschen and Lene shared the solo verses. Significantly, there was no chorus: each character simply delivered his verse, leaving the ritornello to prepare the listener for the next repetition of the music:<sup>3</sup>



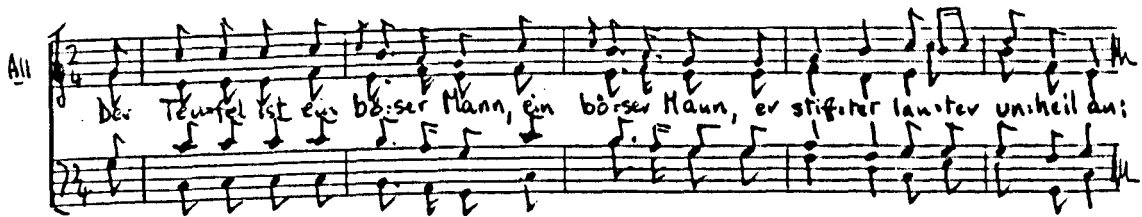
The purpose of this song seems to have been to give the audience an opportunity to applaud the efforts of some of the minor characters: this was followed by the departure of Liebreich and his wife, no doubt accompanied by more applause. Therefore, when the time came to sing the final chorus the audience, no doubt stimulated by their own applause, would be all the more willing to join in with the company and sing the final chorus.

1. Ibid.

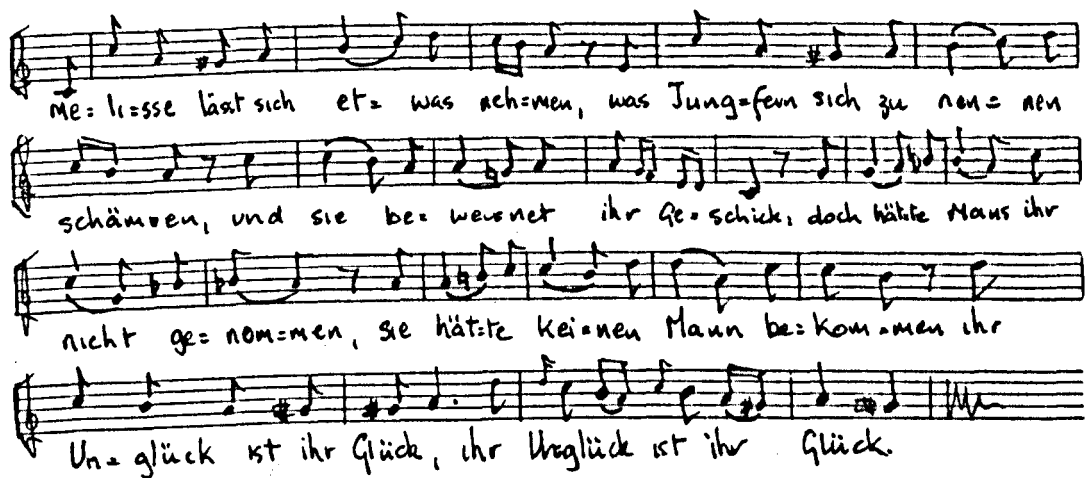
2. See above, pp. 209-10.

3. Mus. MSS 1190 (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek), No. 35, f. 84b.

This Hiller composed in the manner of the French chanson en ronde in which the chorus was sung first, being repeated after each of the solo verses. This piece was made more effective by means of vocal effect Hiller introduced into his arrangement. He set the four lines of the chorus in a four-part arrangement, using open fifths to add colour to the word böse:<sup>1</sup>

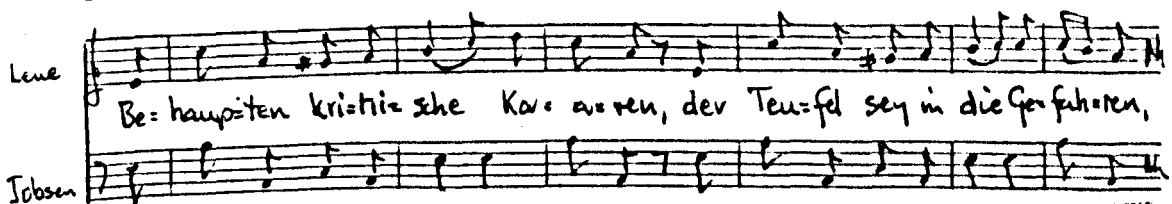


This was followed immediately by an epigrammatic verse sung by the butler to a contrasting melody set in the relative minor key:<sup>2</sup>



The ensuing codetta then led straight back to the chorus which everyone (including the public) would have sung together.

Hiller arranged the last verse as a duet for the two main characters, Jobsen and Lene:<sup>3</sup>



1. Ibid., No. 36, f. 88.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

Weisse seems to have been anxious to circumvent any repetition of the ugly exchanges that had followed the success of the one-act version performed in 1752, and which led to the court action between Gottsched and Koch.<sup>1</sup> Even though the old Gottsched party had long since ceased to be a force majeure in the literary world, Weisse included a last verse which served both to dismiss his erstwhile critics and appeal directly to his audience for their continued appreciation and support when the piece finally received its first performance on the 18th May 1766:<sup>2</sup>

Jobsen und Lene. (Ans Parterre.)

Behaupten kritische Korsaren,  
Der Teufel sey in die gefahren,  
Die unsern Teufel nicht verschmähn:  
O widerlegt die Splitterrichter  
Durch Beyfall, freundliche Gesichter,  
Und kommt, ihn oft zu sehn.

Fortunately, there was no repetition of the scandalous scenes of 1752. On the contrary, the piece was again an outstanding success, with audiences returning to the theatre in order to enjoy the work of the company once more, and its success immediately prompted Koch to commission more pieces. Among these were: Lisuart und Dariolette (1766), Lottchen am Hofe (1767) and Die Liebe auf dem Lande (1768). However, Weisse next revised the sequel to Der Teufel, Der lustige Schuster, (1768), for the Schuh'sche theatre company.<sup>3</sup>

One further benefit that accrued to the company was the way in which the actress playing the role of Lene, Fraulein Steinbrecher, became a celebrity overnight, with the fortunate result that audiences would in future come to see the performer - the star attraction the theatre could offer the public.<sup>4</sup>

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1. See above, p. 81. Also Weisse, Komische Opern (Leipzig, 1768), 2 vols, Vorrede.

2. Minor, Ch. F. Weisse (Innsbruck, 1880), p. 139. See also Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1777), p. 101.

3. This piece, prepared in response to a commission from the Schuh'sche company, was never performed by Koch.

4. Allgemeine deutsche Biographie, see entry under "Steinbrecher: Die Schauspiele Familie".

Reports of Koch's growing success attracted attention far beyond the confines of Leipzig, and regular reports on the progress of German theatre life appeared in an annual publication printed by one Herr Bock in Hamburg. Between 1766 and 1769 eight volumes were published under the collective title: Unterhaltungen.<sup>1</sup> Intriguingly, the author of the reports on the Leipzig theatre remains unknown, but they include reviews of the 'latest' Singspiele and one or two of Weisse's tragedies. In addition, the author of these reports reveals an intimate knowledge not only of Hiller's work but also his method. The reviews of Hiller's music occur within the various reports on the activities of the Koch company, and together they provide one possible explanation for the large number of discrepancies that exist between the score that Hiller wrote for Der Teufel in 1766, as it appears in the manuscript, and the version he issued in his keyboard edition four years later in 1770.

#### M. The response of the critics

As a direct result of his success with the new version of Der Teufel Koch's financial position improved to the point when he could move once more into better premises. On this occasion Leipzig's newest theatre, built under the auspices of one of the city's wealthy merchants, was available and Koch, playing the leading role in Schlegel's tragedy, Hermann, opened there on the 6th October 1767.<sup>2</sup> The following month Koch staged another Singspiel. Lisuart und Dariolette was a two-act piece written by Schiebeler and set to music by Hiller.<sup>3</sup> It received

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1. Unterhaltungen (Hamburg, 1766-69), 8 Bde, Hrsg. Bock. In his short autobiography, among his journalistic activities Hiller refers to a new proposal by his publisher Herr M. Breitkopf. This was to be a publication in imitation of Musikalische Vierlerley, published by Herr (Phil. Em.) Bach in Hamburg. Moreover, the proposed work was to be printed under the title: Unterhaltungen. Clearly this could not have been the same publication as the one printed by Bock in Hamburg but the name Johann Adam Hiller appears among the subscribers. See ii, p. 512.

2. Blümner, Geschichte des Theaters (Leipzig, 1818, p. 158).

3. Hiller, Lisuart und Dariolette (Leipzig, 1768), Keyboard Edition.

its first performance on the 24th November.<sup>1</sup>

This event was noted by the critics and in due course a report appeared in the Hamburg Unterhaltungen. The author of the report commented kindly on Hiller's music but noted that a number of the pieces were written in the style of the opéra comique: that is to say, in the French version of the Italian style. Among pieces singled out by the author for special mention were the Anfangschor, Romanze and the Morgenlied. The critic, however, went on to say that Hiller's Arien remained in keeping with the German style, characterised by their depth of emotional expression, charming melodies and well-constructed accompaniments. The author also noted that Hiller's serious Arien would have been equally well placed in the opera seria, and that while the French music had the advantage of allowing the spectator to follow the action more closely, it seemed (to the critic) that German lovers of music preferred to hear more Arien written in the style of Graun or Hasse.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, it is clear that public demand for this new entertainment continued undiminished.

In response, Koch commissioned a new Singspiel from Weisse and Hiller. The result of their labours was a full-length adaptation of Charles Simon Favart's Ninette à la Cour. This three-act entertainment was acted under its German title: Lottchen am Hofe, and received its first performance on the 14th April 1767.<sup>3</sup> This event was important enough to attract the interest of the press, and again a critical notice appeared in Hamburg Unterhaltungen. The music, according to the author, was once more a mixture of French and Italian styles. On this occasion Hiller received praise for his skill in matching his songs with the characters in the piece. The author was impressed by the light and easy melodies of his Arietten. These were short, not overburdened with decoration and, in

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1. Unterhaltungen (Hamburg, 1766), ii, p. 503.

2. Ibid., ii, p. 503.

3. Ibid., iv, p. 651. The French songs were short and did not detract from the action.

fact, entirely devoid of coloratura passages.<sup>1</sup> In the opinion of the critic the absence of these musical adornments, by not detracting from the scenes of comedy, improved the entertainment as a whole.

The following year Koch's company performed yet another new Singspiel in response to popular demand. This was also a full-length entertainment adapted from the French, but on this occasion Weisse amalgamated two pieces by different authors. Thus, he used Madame Favart's Annette et Lubin to supply the first and final acts of this three-act piece, and Louis Anseaume's La clochette to furnish the second act. Acted under its German title, Die Liebe auf dem Lande received its première on the 24th April 1768. The music did not attract much attention from the critic beyond the fact that it was composed in the French rather than the Italian style, since there was not one da capo aria, nor yet any of the boring street ballads of most French operas.<sup>2</sup>

The critical observations printed in the Hamburg Unterhaltungen emphasise the absence of a set design for this form of entertainment and, moreover, that given these circumstances the composer was looking for ways of improving both the style of musical delivery and some means of clarifying its dramatic function. In this respect he worked under a distinct disadvantage.

Koch, the theatre manager, was primarily concerned with maintaining his success in attracting audiences. For this reason Hiller was under considerable pressure to write the kind of music that met Koch's requirements. In his autobiography Hiller revealed the extent to which this division of interests introduced discord into the relationship between the two men:<sup>3</sup>

Unfortunately Koch did not always share my opinion.  
He maintained that the structure of a song should

1. See below, p. 223.

2. Unterhaltungen (Hamburg, 1766-69), v, p. 503.

3. J.A. Hiller (Hrsg. A. Einstein) Lebensläufe deutscher Musiker von ihnen selbst erzählt (Leipzig, 1915), 4 Bde. See i, "Johann Adam Hiller", p. 24.

always be light, and of such a character as to allow every spectator to join in with the singing. I understand very well that Koch was not entirely wrong, when the operetta contained scenes drawn to represent the lives of the lower classes: a peasant girl could not be expected to sing an aria da bravura any more than a prince could be drawn realistically with the songs of a peasant girl put into his mouth. I have maintained the difference between the characters in all the rustic scenes, which Weisse prepared with such success, but those who have seen these pieces will also have noticed that the forms of these different Arien are not so far apart.

Unfortunately, Hiller's autobiography is all too brief. Nevertheless, his comments are sufficiently detailed to provide an alternative view to the criticisms of his music which appear in the Hamburg Unterhaltungen. Clearly he and Weisse were expected to include a number of songs written and composed so that audiences could join in with the singing of the actors. This might well have resulted in providing the kind of song written in the style of a "street ballad" that so offended the reviewer of Hiller's music to Die Liebe auf dem Lande.<sup>1</sup>

Writing in 1774, at a time when Hiller was established as the leading composer of this musical genre, a slightly different picture emerges. Johann Friedrich Reichardt, himself a devotee of Hiller's music, paid a glowing tribute to his success in taking elements of French and Italian music and welding them into a single, identifiable style.<sup>2</sup> This became the definitive form of the early Singspiel, and other composers freely imitated it.<sup>3</sup>

Reichardt particularly admired Hiller's use of miniature song forms for the reason that they served the comic interest of the pieces so well.<sup>4</sup> This was an opinion Reichardt held in common with the reviewer of the Singspiele, who maintained that the longer the songs were, the less effective they were. This appears to have marked one of the limits of

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1. See above, p. 215.

2. Reichardt, Über die deutsche Comische Oper (Hamburg, 1774), p. 7.

3. Minor, Ch. F. Weisse (Innsbruck, 1880), pp. 193-9.

4. Reichardt, Deutsche Comische Oper (Hamburg, 1774), p. 8.



Hiller's freedom to experiment. The music reviews printed in the Hamburg Unterhaltungen are mostly well disposed towards the new song styles, but there came a point when the songs ceased to charm, and in his review of Die Liebe auf dem Lande the author complained at the length of some of the songs and duets.<sup>1</sup>

As to the French influences in Hiller's work, Reichardt appears to have been on less sure ground for he was unable to explain precisely what these were. Nevertheless, he advanced the suggestion that "Herr Hiller has invented his own Form of Arie, which he probably derived from the French rondeau, though nothing like the rondeau itself."<sup>2</sup> Another matter over which the author of the reviews and Reichardt found accord was in their mutual deprecation of French theatre songs. Reichardt was particularly dismissive of them, maintaining that a French song was successful only if the spectator could listen to it once, and join in with the music on hearing it for a second time: moreover, he maintained that a song of this type must of necessity contain neither too much in the way of novelty nor must it present too many difficulties for the singers among the spectators.<sup>3</sup> Thus not all of Hiller's admirers favoured the move towards simplicity at the expense of melodic interest. In fact, taken at face value, his critics give the impression that he was remarkable not so much for his originality as for his skill in adapting foreign styles to meet the needs of the new Singspiele.

No doubt due to coincidence, most of these musical innovations were written between the time when Der Teufel received its première in 1766 and the publication of the improved version of the music, which appeared in the keyboard edition of 1770: two events now represented by the theatre manuscript version and what should be its printed equivalent, the keyboard edition. Fortunately, this is not the case, and the disparity

1. Unterhaltungen (Hamburg, 1766-69), v, p. 369. See also above, p. 217.

2. Reichardt, Deutsche Comische Oper (Hamburg, 1774), pp. 9-10.

3. Ibid.

between the two versions provides a unique opportunity to examine the extent of these external influences on some of Hiller's theatre songs.

N. The keyboard edition of 1770

As mentioned already, Hiller went to considerable trouble over preparing the music from Der Teufel for publication. Even the songs by Standfuss did not escape considerable 'correction' and 'improvement'. In view of this, it is not surprising to find that many of Hiller's songs were simplified. For example, some passages that could only be supported by the actors within the dramatic context of a theatre performance were cut altogether; in others, the songs that he deemed unsuitable were substantially altered or replaced with an entirely new melody.

The songs in question appear in the list below:<sup>1</sup>

Lene: <u>Wir sind ja auch von Fleisch und Bein</u>	p. 5.
Lieschen: <u>Ist das ein schön Gesicht</u>	p. 9.
Lene: <u>Verbietet nur etwas der Frau</u>	p. 25.
Jobsen: <u>Lasst den Weibern nur den Willen</u>	p. 34.
Lieschen: <u>Wo sie ist, ist der Teufel los</u>	p. 37.
Jobsen: <u>Das eine Frau sich mit des Manne zankt</u>	p. 42.
Kellner: <u>Wenn eine Frau das Joch zerbricht</u>	p. 67.

Interestingly, in spite of the general move away from the Italian style in the Singspiele during this four-year period, Lene's song Wir sind ja auch von Fleisch und Bein is composed in the old-style da capo form.<sup>2</sup>

Lieschen's song, Ist das ein schön Gesicht, is of much greater interest. This is the first of the four comic songs written in the style of a vaudeville, already discussed.<sup>3</sup> Whereas this appeared in the theatre manuscript in the form of a strophic song, Hiller composed an

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1. Hiller, Die verwandelten Weiber (Leipzig, 1770).

2. Ibid., p. 5.

3. Ibid., p. 9. See above, p. 182.

entirely new setting of the words for the keyboard edition.

This song provides a typical example of Hiller's developing style, being one of those songs in which each phrase appears to flow into the next. Hiller used the introduction to link the song with the character and the mood of the action; all the parts agreeing with the whole. To this end, he employed a method in common use at the time, but in such a way as to win the admiration of fellow composers. The ritornello formed the main plank of his scheme, serving to link the song with its character and the mood of the action at that point of the drama: the first four bars supplying the melody for the first two lines of each of the seven-line stanzas:<sup>1</sup>



The remaining lines of the first stanza were then set to a melody expanded from these figures at 'b', 'c' and 'd':<sup>2</sup>

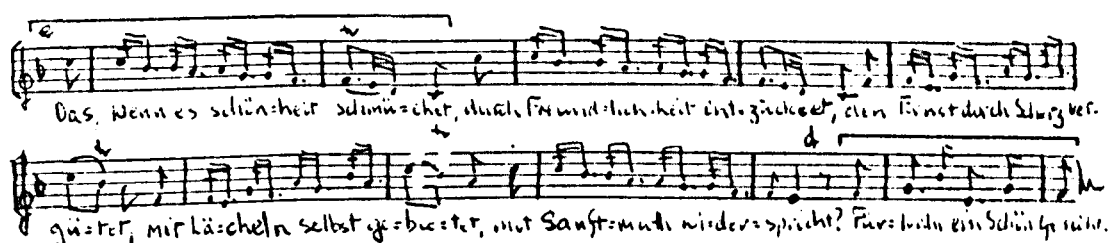


Then follows a restatement of the opening four-bar melody, with the remaining lines of the second stanza set to melodic fragments expanded from the foregoing verse. Thus, the section at 'e' supplies the opening phrase for the new part of the second stanza:<sup>3</sup>

1. Hiller, Die verwandelten Weiber (Leipzig, 1770), p. 9.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., p. 10.



The song then leads straight to the coda which consists of the last four bars of the ritornello. The overall result is a song that bears a passing resemblance to a number of single verse forms, but which fits none of them with any certainty.<sup>1</sup> The form makes sense only because of Hiller's underlying wish to preserve some degree of unity within the music, while at the same time following the changing sense of the text as closely as possible. As a result he moved away from the conventional arietta towards an open-ended form capable of infinite development:

R - A - B - R - A - B<sup>1</sup> - Coda  
 tonic - t ———> dom. ——— tonic dom. tonic

Jobsen's song, Lasst den Weibern nur den Willen, was another completely new setting.<sup>2</sup> The original had been set in the tenor voice range  $e^b$  to  $e^1$  in the key of E flat major. Hiller set the new version in G major at a pitch more accessible to the bass voice at  $d - d^1$ . Otherwise the new setting was composed in the form of a conventional buffa-style arietta.

Lieschen's song, Wo sie ist, ist der Teufel los, occurs at a point in the action when Frau Liebreich's maid calls at the cottage to find out whether her mistress's shoes are ready for collection. The version contained in the theatre manuscript is a theatre piece designed to illustrate the below-stairs character of a gossiping maidservant: the music is also repetitive. Hiller wrote an entirely new setting again employing the melodic style of opera buffa in a conventional arietta: A - B. The song is just a little too grand for the character and Hiller added a long

1. Ibid., p. 34.

2. Ibid.

coloratura passage for the maid - a joke, no doubt, intended at the expense of the opera seria:<sup>1</sup>



Significantly, the text reveals that Weisse originally intended this to be a strophic song, but both of Hiller's settings show his preference for a single verse form. This is another example where the inclusion of a strophic song did not entirely fit the situation; and where he saw an advantage in exploiting the operatic possibilities offered by the situation.

Jobsen's song, Das eine Frau sich mit der Manne zankt, is written in conventional arietta form in order to capitalise on the possibilities offered by the text.<sup>2</sup> The original version is very obviously written to accommodate stage action. The keyboard version appears to have been written for performance in the home.

The penultimate number in the keyboard edition replaces a six-verse strophic setting in the theatre version. Significantly, this entirely fresh setting is headed divertissement: the term signifying the vaudeville finale. It is also marked rondeau, by which is intended a chanson en rond, for with its total of six verses this is clearly not a rondeau in the strict sense of the term. It is written, however, so that the first line of the succeeding verse completes the cycle:<sup>3</sup>

A - B - A<sup>1</sup> - C - [A].

Of equal interest is the style of the new melody, for in place of the leaping character of the old version written for the tenor voice, f - f<sup>1</sup> in the key of F major, Hiller substituted a melody which moved comfortably by step in the key of G major; and, although the chorus

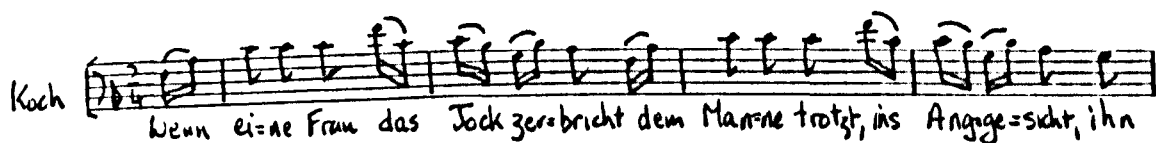
1. Ibid., pp. 37-8.

2. See above, p. 197.

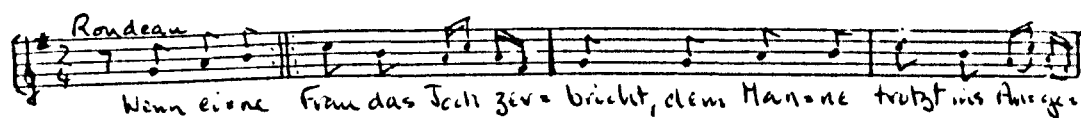
3. Hiller, Die verwandelten Weiber (Leipzig, 1770), p. 66.

line presents something of a hurdle, it was intended for mixed voices. Thus, it is obvious that Hiller deliberately simplified the song and, moreover, re-cast it in a form that was identifiably French. The two versions appear below for comparison.

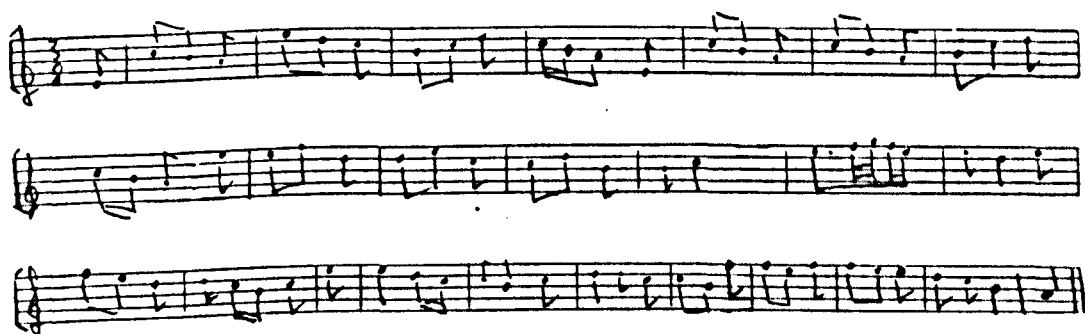
(a) The 1766 version:<sup>1</sup>



(b) The 1770 version:<sup>2</sup>



This new style appears to have grown in popularity with the public. In the Schlusschor to Der Dorfbalbir (1771) the solo verses are written in the style of a Parisian street song:<sup>3</sup>



Reviewed in relation to the various commentaries published at the time, the results are illuminating. Hiller was open to new influences. This is particularly noticeable in his 'symphonies', which were clearly intended to preview the scenes about to unfold. Hiller may have pursued this course of action on his own behalf, but it is of interest to note how closely his overtures follow the criteria advocated by the encyclo-

1. Mus. MSS 1190 (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek), No. 35, f. 84b.

2. Hiller, Die verwandelten Weiber (Leipzig, 1770), p. 66.

3. Hiller, Der Dorfbalbir (Leipzig, 1771). Keyboard edition, p. 53.

pedist D'Alembert.<sup>1</sup> Significantly, in the case of the music he wrote for the closing scenes of the Singspiele, usually identified by the term divertissement, the French influence is unmistakable. Judging from the alterations made to the score of Der Teufel, however, this influence did not extend as far as the Hamburg critic seems to suggest.

The fact is that many of the alterations Hiller introduced into his new edition arose from the necessity of arranging music written to accompany action on stage for performance in the drawing room; but, where Hiller made alterations of this kind, it is noticeable that he also took advantage of this opportunity to improve the form of the music. Thus Lene's song, Verbietet nur etwas der Frau, originally written to the design:<sup>2</sup>

A - B - A - C

appears in the keyboard edition in the form of a through-composed song:<sup>3</sup>

A - B - C - D.

Similarly, Lene's expansive aria, Das ist der Himmel sicherlich, originally written to its appropriate formal design:

A - B - A<sup>1</sup>

was re-arranged so that it took on a *different* form:

A - A<sup>1</sup> || B ||.

Hiller was consistent in his review of the music to Der Teufel, and comparison with the published editions of those Singspiele that were composed between 1766 and 1770 are remarkable for their similarity. In some respects, however, the judgement of the critics is open to question. For example, the charge that Hiller aped the French fashion for the Romanze is open to question: the fact is that the first of the pieces labelled Romanze appears in the theatre manuscript version of Der Teufel. Moreover, this particular example was composed not by Hiller but by Standfuss.

1. See above, pp. 159-63.

2. Mus. MSS 1190 (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek), No. 18, f. 39b.

3. Hiller, Die verwandelten Weiber (Leipzig, 1770), p. 25.

Far from being French in origin, this was one of the songs translated by Weisse from The Devil to Pay for the one-act version of 1752. Thus the style of the Romanze was established long before Weisse had visited Paris. Jobsen's song, Es war einmal ein junges Weib, is Weisse's translation of Coffey's ballad, The Wife of Bath, a typical English ballad written around a moral. Moreover, the general moralising tone of these pieces was sustained by Weisse, and provided Hiller with the inspiration for many of his best received volkstümliche Lieder.

The overall impression is that Hiller as a composer was necessarily sympathetic to new ideas, but only in so far as they fitted into his own musical design. In this respect it is quite clear that the so-called French influence did not supersede his admiration for the Italian style, nor the dramatic interest that could, with benefit, flow from an operatic treatment of a situation. Thus he retained a strong preference for the arietta. This form, however, did not necessarily meet every dramatic need, besides which constant repetition of any single form would eventually spoil the effect of the whole. Hiller's solution to this problem was to allow the text to dictate what form the song would take. In this way, he made a contribution of considerable importance to German song by means of the through-composed Lied. In addition to this, building on the example of Standfuss, his lasting innovation was the volkstümliches Lied. Significantly, all of these 'developments' were employed in Der Teufel, the very first of his Singspiele.

The ~~order~~ of the musical items, however, was not decided by the composer though, naturally, he decided which kind of song would best meet the needs of a particular dramatic situation. The development of the Singspiel as a genre remained a literary matter and, as such, the form that it would take in the future depended upon Weisse, the author of the texts.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### LITERARY REFORM AND THE SINGSPIEL

#### A. Der Teufel ist los and Gottsched's waning influence

Weisse's success with his one-act version of Der Teufel in 1752 came at a crucial time in the renaissance of German drama, for it brought into question Gottsched's suitability as leader of the reforming literary party in Germany. His success in establishing himself in this leading role has already been discussed. The purpose of the present discourse is to review those events which led to Gottsched's downfall, opening up the way to the reform of the German stage by means of the tragedy.

This was a movement to which Weisse gave his unstinting support. Its success marked the rebirth of a literary tradition on the German stage different from that envisaged by Gottsched but one which soon affected lower forms of entertainment. Therefore it was only natural that such reforms would also affect the Singspiel: an entertainment too new at that time to have traditions of its own. Weisse, both as a friend of the reformer, Lessing, and as a dramatist in his own right played an important part in furthering these reforms. In order to appreciate the significance of these events it is helpful to return to the controversy that raged between the various literary factions during the 1740s.

The seeds of Gottsched's downfall were contained in his original publication Versuch einer kritischen Dichtkunst (1730). This marked the beginning of his efforts to redefine the criteria governing higher forms of poetry. Because the tragedies of that time were written in Alexandrine verse Gottsched's treatise, simply by definition, dealt largely with the business of the stage. Having dismissed the English dramatists for their failure to observe the classical unities as laid down by Aristotle,

Gottsched selected either French or classical Greek models upon which to reform German tragedy. At the same time he derided the Italian opera, but his attack on the excesses of imagination in the operas drew an immediate response from Professor Bodmer, who had at that time recently published a prose version of Milton's Paradise Lost. This resulted in the pamphlet war waged between the Swiss and Gottsched's party.

Apart from the acrimony, the controversy served Gottsched particularly well, keeping his proposed reforms at the forefront of public awareness. Meanwhile, he continued to commend to his pupils and followers those French and classical Greek models he considered ideal. For the benefit of the theatre managers recruited to his cause, Gottsched translated a steady stream of plays intended for performance in German theatres.

#### B. The old tragedy

No matter how perfectly constructed these plays were, the tragedies simply failed to attract audiences large enough to recoup the day-to-day expenses laid out by the theatre companies. Yet, when Neuber and Schöne-  
mann staged the kind of entertainments that their audiences wanted to see, Gottsched was horrified and even took personal offence. Thus, these partnerships did not last: first Schöne-  
mann and then Frau Neuber abandoned his cause in an atmosphere of such recrimination that, with the aid of Koch, she ridiculed him during the final scenes of his own best known play.<sup>1</sup> In other respects his achievements were as substantial as they were self-evident and in his book, Redekunst nach Anleitung der Griechen und Römer published in 1743, he advocated the use of costume appropriate to the period in which the action of a play was set.<sup>2</sup> Also, he offered advice on deportment and the use of gesture. A further indication of his standing in the community is provided by the fact that when Koch

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1. Blümner, Geschichte des Theaters Leipzig (Leipzig, 1818), p. 70.

2. Gottsched, Redekunst nach Anleitung der Griechen und Römer (Leipzig, 1743).

moved into the 'new' theatre in Leipzig's Quandts Hof in 1751 it was well understood that the interior layout was to a design by Gottsched.<sup>1</sup> In spite of this close association with the theatre, his inability to appreciate the risk of running a theatre company as a business undertaking was disastrous. Because of it, he failed to perceive the difficulties which beset his partners. Also, he made no attempt to understand the measures they were forced to take in order to keep their companies in being. Indeed, Frau Neuber survived on her ability to play the role of Harlequin in the innumerable intermezzos that accompanied the main entertainments, mainly translated from the Italian or French.

Given the prevailing literary atmosphere it is not surprising to find that the more liberal minds of the Gottsched party grew dissatisfied with the official line he took. They formed a separate group. Their journal, Neue Beyträge zum Vergnügen des Verstandes und Witzes, was published in Bremen and gave rise to their nickname. These were the Bremer Beyträge.<sup>2</sup> Among them was the dramatist Johann Elias Schlegel.<sup>3</sup>

In 1747 he had demonstrated Gottsched's vulnerability to close criticism when Gottsched embarked upon a new venture, publishing a set of plays translated for the German stage: Schaubühne nach dem Muster der Alten. The first volume was to have included an annotated translation of Aristotle's verse and two tragedies by Sophocles: Oedopus and Elektra. In the event, when the work appeared Schlegel discovered that Elektra was, in fact, by Gottsched himself and as a result of Schlegel's charges and subsequent correspondence, Gottsched withdrew the first volume.<sup>4</sup>

Within his own circle Gottsched's influence remained undiminished, and

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1. Blümner, Geschichte des Theaters Leipzig (Leipzig, 1818), p. 89.

2. Robertson (ed. D. Reich), A History of German Literature (London, 1979), p. 225. See above, p. 62.

3. Robertson (ed. D. Reich), A History of German Literature (London, 1970), pp. 225-6.

4. T.W. Danzel, Gottsched und seiner Zeit (New York, 1970), p. 145-6.

he continued to exert considerable power over theatre life, not least by means of his most popular piece: Der sterbende Cato. This was a translation of Deschamps's Caton d'Utique but the end is adapted from Addison's Cato.<sup>1</sup> In spite of this indiscretion the play was written with due regard to the niceties of form advocated by Gottsched, and in the elegant Alexandrine couplets that had become popular with audiences:<sup>2</sup>

Cato. Ein andrer würde hier in tausend Aengsten seyn,  
So sehr stimmt das Geschick mit unsern Feinden ein.  
Der junge Scipio und Juba, sind geschlagen;  
Nur Cäsar triumphirt auf seinem Sieges wagen.

As a result of this literary fashion, when Caspar von Borcke, the original translator of The Devil to Pay, translated Shakespeare's play Julius Caesar into German (1741-44) he re-cast the dialogue in the form of Alexandrine verse. This fragment of Anthony's final speech, the penultimate speech in the play, gives a general impression of the style.<sup>3</sup>

Anthony. Dies war der Edelste gewiss von ihnen Allen,  
Der, als ein Römer soll, gestanden und gefallen.  
All andre thaten nur uns Kund, was sie gethan,  
Weil sie mit Missgunst stets den grossen Cäsar sahn  
Er einzig und allein aus redlichen Bedenken,  
Aus Furcht, man möchte Rom an seiner Freiheit kränken  
Und vors gemeine Wohl hat als ein braver Held  
Zu der Verräther Schaar mit Unschuld sich gestellt.  
Sein Leben war so mild und liebe reich, seine Gaben  
Die seine Feinde selbst an ihm gepriesen haben,  
So gross, dass die Natur, die selbst ihn lieb gewann,  
Zur ganzen Welt sich lehrt, und spricht:  
dass war ein Mann!

Gottsched's reaction was predictable: he condemned the play for its lack of discipline. Shakespeare had not only mixed scenes of comedy with those of tragedy, but also not regulated the action in accordance with the dramatic unities in the way that Gottsched considered desirable. His opponents, on the other hand, were of a different opinion. Johann Elias Schlegel was prompted to re-examine the classical rules and as a

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1. Robertson (ed. D. Reich), A History of German Literature (London, 1970), p. 222.

2. Gottsched, Die deutsche Schaubühne Faksimiliedruck von der Ausgabe (Stuttgart, 1972), 6 Bde. See vi, p. 185.

3. Danzel, Gottsched und seine Zeit (New York, 1970), p. 148. Von Borcke's translation must have been completed a little later than his translation of The Devil to Pay but certainly before 1745.

result of his deliberations advanced the opinion that a tragedy concerned with the development of character, as opposed to a tragedy concerned only with a moral, could be written in a freer form. Nevertheless, Schlegel felt that the moral tragedy still needed the discipline that the unities provided. Thus, during the time when Weisse and Lessing were students at the university, there existed two distinct literary camps, and it is most significant that the two young men had no hesitation in allying themselves with the more liberal Bremer Beyträge.

No doubt encouraged by the members of the circle, and by the example of Lessing, Weisse quickly came to the conclusion that English plays provided the best opportunities upon which to found the new German literature; and his first major play, Die Poeten nach der Mode (1751), provides ample evidence of Weisse's leanings towards the English drama at this time; but its subject - the controversy raging between the Swiss and Gottsched - supplied all the comedy. Fortunately for Weisse and Koch, the play won the unstinting approval of the public and, for such a topical piece, it retained its popularity for many years.<sup>1</sup> More important than this was its widespread appeal. Eckhof's production of the play staged in Hamburg in 1756 was, by all accounts, also received with enthusiasm.<sup>2</sup>

The success of the play, though not intended as a personal attack on Gottsched, coincided with a fall in his personal standing. The fact was that, although Weisse's satire was gentle enough in itself, the public stance adopted by the opposing factions left little scope for Weisse to add to the comedy on the weakness of human nature being played out in real life.

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1. According to Minor the piece was performed in Berlin in 1771, five years after Gottsched's death. See Minor, Ch. F. Weisse (Innsbruck, 1880), p. 91. See also above, p. 62.

2. Weisse, Selbstbiographie (Leipzig, 1806), p. 39. Robertson (ed. D. Reich), A History of German Literature (London, 1970), p. 222.

His success with Der Teufel the following year was another matter entirely: it was an adaptation of an English play; it contained scenes depicting the supernatural world; and it was performed in Koch's theatre. In view of the circumstances, Gottsched's reaction to this threat to his life's work is understandable: in the event, however, his opposition only succeeded in bringing discredit upon himself following the litigation with Koch. Significantly, Coffey's 'harmless scenes' of English comedy succeeded in clearing away the last shreds of Gottsched's influence outside his own circle. At the same time, it is most unlikely that the pamphlet war between the factions would have lasted through the war years (1756-63). Gottsched's difficulty in maintaining good personal relationships with his associates also must have weakened his position. Now it was the turn of the rising generation of dramatists to sustain the theatre reforms already set in motion by Gottsched. During the 1750s both Weisse and Lessing had won recognition as successful playwrights, but ultimately it was Lessing whose work pointed the way that future developments of German drama would take.

### C. Lessing's tragedy of common life

Lessing cast aside the restrictions imposed by French classicism, and instead advocated the 'natural' style of English drama. The first practical result of his theories was the bürgerliches Trauerspiel, Miss Sara Sampson (1755).<sup>1</sup> This was a tragedy of common life drawn directly from the example of George Lillo's The London Merchant (1731). Lessing used the interaction between the characters to explore human nature in terms of his own modern society within the scenes of a tragedy drawn from everyday life. In circumstances such as these, the use of traditional Alexandrine verse would have been out of place. Instead, Lessing chose to use the prose dialogue of natural speech, more in keeping with the play's

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1. Robertson, History of German Literature (London, 1970), pp. 251-2.

scenes of everyday life.

Meanwhile Weisse, working independently of Lessing, was developing his own dramatic theory in answer to the problem. His deliberations form the basis of his foreword to the Beyträge zum deutschen Theater, an edition of his own plays published between 1767 and 1771. Acknowledging the lack of any master of the tragedy writing for the German stage, Weisse goes on to outline some of the stylist elements he considered relevant to the genre. His remarks are instructive:<sup>1</sup>

It is impossible to become a dramatist by simply applying a set of rules, and without setting foot in the theatre. Also, one needs experience of both high and low life, ... the speech of everyday life and the language in which to express the emotions. If a playwright fails in these basic skills, his efforts to become a dramatist are still-born.

Weisse then goes on to consider the value of literary models:<sup>2</sup>

A good example never fails. Beside the great examples of the ancient world, we have the examples provided by our near neighbours the English and the French; each with a long history of drama of their own. We do not wish merely to be imitators, a fault all too often practised by us in the past. Would we not do well, therefore, if we steered a middle course between the two, learning from both, so that we could find a way of our own? From the English we could learn about the importance of the situation in a tragedy, the treatment and definition of character, the visual expression of nobility, dashing courage and passion: from the French the agreement of the parts with the whole, the breeding and language of the court, conviviality and love and, lastly, learn the benefits of structure and discipline. By means of such an amalgamation, we would avoid the bombast and exaggeration of one, and the triviality of the other; avoiding the lack of restraint and structure of the English, and the galant and empty coquetterie of the French.

He then went on to combine his own ideals with the most vital element in Lessing's dramatic theory, but in doing so Weisse also reached out to the traditions of the classical past: not through the example of the

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1. Weisse, Beyträge zum deutschen Theater (Leipzig, 1767-71), 5 Bde. See i, Vorbericht.

2. Ibid.

French, but rather in the light of their own developing literature:<sup>1</sup>

Yet, better still, we ought to study the nature of  
people's hearts, get to know human emotions, and,  
simply, retrace the steps of the ancients.

D. Weisse's contribution to classical tragedy

Although these ideas were only committed to paper when Weisse began to prepare his plays for publication during the 1760s, it is obvious from the dates of the plays themselves that he applied these new criteria to his earliest tragedies. Significantly, these were written before he revised Der Teufel in 1766 which marks the beginning of his career as a writer of modern Singspiele. Among the first of the tragedies to be treated in this way was Richard III written in 1759.<sup>2</sup> Anyone knowing the English play would recognise that Weisse's tragedy was not intended to be an adaptation of Shakespeare's original version. Nevertheless, he was careful to explain to his readers that he had not presumed to revise a play by such an eminent dramatist: on the contrary, it was the subject that interested him providing, as it did, an opportunity to put his theories into effect.

Weisse's play differed from its English precursor in almost every respect. Shakespeare's historical plays contain elements of pomp and pageantry that would have held little meaning for German audiences in the 1750s. Weisse avoided this aspect of the English model entirely by the simple expedient of adhering to the unities of place and action. Thus, in Weisse's play the action takes place in one room in the Tower of London, and no scene is included that does not also contribute to the outcome of the main plot. Because of this, the incidental scenes set in London's streets or in the open places of Salisbury, that enliven Shakespeare's plot, are entirely absent from Weisse's play; but equally

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1. Ibid.

2. Weisse, Trauerspiele (Leipzig, 1776), 4 Bde. See also Deutsche National Litteratur (Berlin, 1882-9), xlii, p. 4, "Richard III".





play through to the end.<sup>1</sup>

In its new form the play won a much greater reputation in the theatre, and he had the distinction of seeing his play translated into Danish in 1767.<sup>2</sup>

Pleasant as this was, Weisse was far from satisfied with the pace of literary reform, and in the essay which introduced the second volume of the Beyträge zum deutschen Theater he drew attention to the continued use of Alexandrine verse in the theatre, referring to it as: "a needless adornment of German tragedy: which the Italians and the English have already laid aside."<sup>3</sup> Weisse explained his position to his readers, begging their pardon that he was obliged to accommodate the wishes of the theatre companies. Clearly he was merely awaiting a suitable opportunity to discard what had become an outdated mode of expression in the theatre.

Following his success with Der Teufel in 1766, Weisse prepared another tragedy based on a Shakespearian model which was acted the next year, in 1767. This was Romeo und Julie.<sup>4</sup> It is clear that he was influenced by David Garrick's opinion of Shakespeare's play: "so full of jingle and quibble" - that it was difficult to stage without cuts and alterations.<sup>5</sup> Therefore Weisse determined to write a new version of the story in the form of the bürgerliches Trauerspiel pioneered by Lessing.<sup>6</sup> Weisse's experiment with this new form of tragedy carried with it the added advantage that he was able to dispense with the archaic verse dialogue.

Once more he combined a proven English subject with a more modern dramatic treatment. In his foreword to the play, Weisse again criticises Shakespeare for his tendency to include scenes that add nothing to the

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid., footnote.

3. Weisse, Beyträge zum deutschen Theater (Leipzig, 1767-71), ii, Vorbericht.

4. Weisse, Trauerspiele (Leipzig, 1776), iv, p. 97.

5. Weisse, Beyträge zum deutschen Theater (Leipzig, 1767-71), v, Vorbericht.

6. See above, p. 232.

play, and for not making more of the moment of horror in the final scene.

In order to correct these discrepancies, Weisse once more employed the unities as a means of imposing discipline upon the drama which, in turn, excluded all of the incidental scenes to be found in the Shakespearian version. As a result of this course of action, Weisse's play required a final cast of only eight players, against Shakespeare's total of twenty-two, again not including pages, guards and other extra players.<sup>1</sup> Unlike the Shakespearian version, Weisse set the entire action of the first four acts inside one room of the Capallet's palace, with the final act set beside the family grave in the churchyard. Weisse's alterations also made it necessary to re-cast the priest, Benvoglio, as a doctor of Verona, with the scenes of the play set in contemporary times, with its consequent effect on the dialogue.

For example, Weisse suggests in the foreword to the second volume of his Beyträge zum deutschen Theater that:<sup>2</sup>

perhaps the reader will find the dialogue between the two lovers too flowery? that is because it is so, as a result of the individual endeavours of the author, who thought to render the subject true to nature, and give credence to the state of mind of the young couple. The emotion of love, when it springs from the union of two tender hearts, sounds, for the most part, enthusiastic and gushing:

Thus Weisse set out to capture the sugary sentiments of his own times in the dialogue shared by the young lovers:<sup>3</sup>

Julie: Bist du es?

Romeo: Ich bin's.

Julie (fällt ihm um den Hals): O Romeo!

Romeo: O Julie! (Sie sehen sich einander an und schweigen)

Weisse's judgement of the subject proved well founded, and his portrayal of the subject proved its popularity with the public.

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1. Shakespeare (ed. Alexander) Complete Works (London, 1959), p. 902 et seq.

2. Weisse, Beyträge zum deutschen Theater (Leipzig, 1767-71), v, Vorbericht.

3. Weisse, Romeo und Julie (Leipzig, 1776), p. 118.

Interestingly enough, Weisse's play ends with the horror of the double suicide. Thus, in the final scene, when Romeo finds Julie apparently dead, he takes poison. Upon this, Julie awakes from her drug-induced sleep only to discover the tragic consequences of her actions and, upon witnessing Romeo's death, she plunges the dagger into her heart.<sup>1</sup>

Weisse's commentary on this portrayal of human nature is instructive, for it reveals an important aspect of the play that might otherwise be overlooked, namely, the definition and development of the characters. This aspect of the new method is central to the purpose of the drama; building atmosphere out of the tensions developing within the interactions of the characters: characters, moreover, that were no longer abstract inventions from the past, but recognisably drawn from real life.

In his autobiography Weisse paid unstinting tribute to Lessing and the value he placed on the help and criticism he received from his friend and fellow dramatist. Indeed, Weisse's remarks are illuminating:<sup>2</sup>

Weisse had no predecessor among the German tragic poets, with whom he could properly compare such matters as correctness of composition, fruitfulness of invention, the quality and euphony of dialogue, lightness of metrical structure; he had no one near him other than Lessing, whose own genius awoke Weisse to the spirit of the times, and from whom he learned the merits of: originality, sharpness of character, development of psychology, appropriate dialogue - with a word on perfecting the poetry at which he [Lessing] excelled, - the richness of imagination, closeness of observation, the power of the strongest feelings and the violence of passion.

Thus, at the precise time when Weisse was engaged with the revision of Der Teufel ist los, he was also pre-occupied with the wider aim of improving German drama. These ideas predated his visit to Paris, for his

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1. Notably, Shakespeare wrote a different ending for his version of the story: Juliet awakes from her sleep to find Romeo already dead. Thus the moment of horror is weakened. The sense of tragedy is weakened still further when this dramatic climax is followed by an additional scene devoted to the Prince's enquiry into their suicide. See Shakespeare (ed. Alexander), Complete Works (London, 1959), pp. 936-9.

2. Weisse, Selbstbiographie (Leipzig, 1806), p. 321.

first English tragedy, Richard III, was performed in 1759, the same year that he travelled to Paris, arriving in the capital on the 21st November.<sup>1</sup> Clearly, in the light of these revelations, the improvements that he introduced into his Singspiele appear to coincide with the criteria which he applied to his tragedies. He never regarded the musical pieces as anything more than light entertainment, partly resulting from his long-standing interest in comedy exemplified in the original one-act version of Der Teufel, and partly from his exposure to the opéra comique in Paris. The new definition of the characters and, above all, the elements of sentiment and compassion, expressed between Jobsen and his wife, are entirely consistent with the improvements to be discerned in Romeo und Julie. Thus, the psychology of Jobsen's character is entirely consistent with the portrayal of the man as a quarrelsome husband who, in spite of his nature, still cares for his wife. Happily, this improvement also corrected the original weaknesses to be found in the characterisation of the English version.<sup>2</sup>

E. Weisse's last Singspiel: Die Jubelhochzeit (1773).

Equally, when he adapted French pieces for the German stage they underwent a similar transformation, though no-one could entirely disguise the naivety of the French characters. Nevertheless, he sought to soften the artlessness of these characters and laid much greater emphasis on the scenes of comedy. Also, in keeping with his views concerning verse dialogue, Weisse turned the rhyming speech of the opéras comiques into the more natural prose dialogue that he had pioneered in Die Poeten nach der Mode and Der Teufel. Apart from changes like these he was fond of retaining the artful, scheming country girl opposite a mutton-headed, country bumpkin, as in the case of Die Liebe auf dem Lande which was

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1. Ibid., p. 62.

2. See above, pp. 121-2.

adapted from the French.

A few years later, in response to commissions from Koch, Weisse found time to write his first original Singspiele. Significantly, Koch had moved his company to Berlin, and as a result the new Singspiele, Der Aerntekrantz (1772) and Die Jubelhochzeit (1773), were staged in the Prussian capital where Koch died on the 3rd January 1775.<sup>1</sup> Die Jubelhochzeit is of particular interest, partly because it is the last of Weisse's Singspiel texts but most of all for the sake of its originality.

Assuming that this piece represents the culmination of Weisse's experience and the final point of his development of the Singspiel as a genre, it is possible to test the hypothesis that Weisse's Singspiel texts embodied ideals similar to, if not the same as, those exemplified in his series of English plays.<sup>2</sup>

### Die Jubelhochzeit<sup>3</sup>

#### Personen

von Alfred, der Edelmann vom Dorfe

Robert, ein alter angesehner Bauer

Martha, dessen frau

Klaus, einer seiner Söhne

Margarethe, dessen zweite Frau

Dorchen, Roberts Enkelinn, Klausens Tochter

Kunz, ein junger Bauer

Berthold, ein Müller

Anne, Kunzens Schwester, eine junge Bauer Witwe

Eine Menge Kinder und Kindeskinde, Schwiegersöhne

und Schwiegertöchter des alten Roberts

Der Schauplatz ist ein Dorfe.

1. Blümner, Geschichte des Theaters in Leipzig (Leipzig, 1818). The date of Koch's death appears on p. 184. Die Liebe auf dem Lande and Der Aerntekrantz, are printed in the collected edition of Weisse's Singspiele (3 Bde), published in Leipzig in 1777. Die Jubelhochzeit was published separately in Leipzig in 1773.

2. These were: Richard III, Eduard III, Romeo und Julie, printed in Weisse's Trauerspiele (Leipzig, 1774), 4 Bde, and his comedy List über List, printed in the Lustspiele (Leipzig, 1774).

3. Weisse, Die Jubelhochzeit (Leipzig, 1773).

The main subject running through the play is the family celebration in honour of Robert and Martha's wedding jubilee. The children, Klaus and his second wife, figure prominently in these celebrations but the events of the day, however, centre on the play within the play, provided by the love intrigue of Dorchen, Klaus's daughter, who hopes to marry the young farmer, Kunz, who has been drafted in the army. Not having heard from him for nine months, her parents have arranged to marry her off to the wealthiest man in the village, Berthold the miller, a mutton-headed buffoon, heartily disliked by Dorchen.

### Synopsis

#### Act One

The curtain rises to reveal a village scene. In the background there is a mill with steps leading down, against a beautiful red morning sky. Dorchen, moved by the scene and its portent for her grandfather's anniversary, sings a song in praise of the day. She is joined by her friend, Anne. Driven to desperation by her parents' intention of marrying her off to Berthold, Dorchen confides her scheme to avoid this unpleasant prospect by announcing her engagement to her sweetheart, Kunz, during the course of the celebrations. The only obstacle to her intended plan is the absence of any word from Kunz. In the light of these difficulties, Dorchen plans for Anne to marry Berthold.

Meanwhile, Dorchen's stepmother renews her promise to Berthold, who plans to strengthen his claim by putting about the rumour that Kunz is dead.

As the family and friends gather to congratulate Robert and Martha, the couple are informed of their grand-daughter's plight. In response to the news that Kunz may be dead, Robert hands down his ruling that Dorchen will be given to no-one until news is received confirming the fate of Kunz, and an enquiry is sent to his regiment.

### Act Two

By coincidence, Kunz arrives back at the village unaware of the events that have taken place in his absence. Meeting his sister Anne, he regales her with his recent adventures. Having listened, she then explains the situation that has developed in his absence and, thinking to help Dorchon to a prosperous marriage, advises her brother to keep out of sight. As he hides in the mill, Anne meets Dorchon who, in the absence of any news from the regiment, finally gives Kunz up for lost. Anne, still thinking to act in her friend's best interest, reveals nothing as to her brother's whereabouts, leaving Dorchon to be married to Berthold. They are overtaken once more by the celebrations, and Robert declares his pleasure in witnessing the golden radiance of this special day; a sentiment taken up by all the well-wishers and the family.

### Act Three

The village is now decked with flowers in readiness for the celebrations about to begin. Berthold appears, unusually smart. When Dorchon appears he immediately forces his attentions on her. She resists, but the situation is finally resolved by the unexpected appearance of Kunz. Berthold, taking this to be an apparition, runs off stage. With the re-appearance of Kunz, Dorchon immediately announces her engagement, and when Berthold re-appears he is paired with Anne. As the rest of the family, their friends and the villagers arrive, they gather not only to honour the anniversary of Robert and Martha, but also to celebrate the happiness of the young couples, and the play ends with scenes of jubilation and dancing.

### F. Hiller's music

From the point of view of the music Hiller's keyboard edition is of considerable interest. The overture takes the form of the conventional Italian symphony, written in three movements. In common with the earlier sinfonia avanti l'opera, Hiller composed an opening motif that sets a



festive atmosphere in anticipation of the scenes about to be acted:<sup>1</sup>



Hiller composed the first movement using the same layout that he had employed in his earlier symphonies. Thus, as in the previous pieces, the opening motif was followed immediately by a transition to the dominant key ending in a cadence. This announced a second, more lyrical, melody:<sup>2</sup>

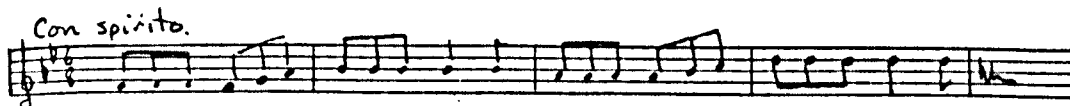


which leads into a long codetta, and after a brief development section the movement was rounded off by a reprise in the tonic.

The second movement is short and sentimental in character. It provides the necessary contrast of style and key:<sup>3</sup>



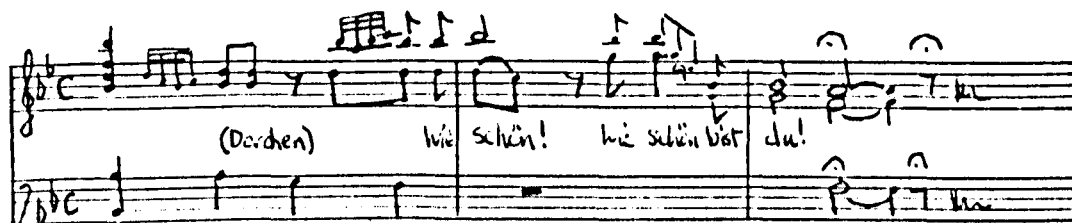
The final movement, con spirito, brings the opening symphony to a rousing conclusion:<sup>4</sup>



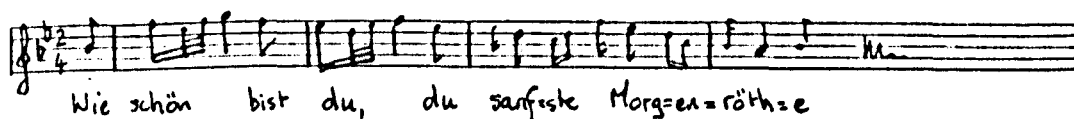
Unlike the earlier pieces, however, Hiller dovetailed the last bars of the overture with the first bars of Dorchen's morning song. Thus

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1. Hiller, Die Jubelhochzeit (Leipzig, 1773), Keyboard Edition, p. 3.
  2. Ibid., p. 4.
  3. Ibid., p. 9.
  4. Ibid., p. 11.

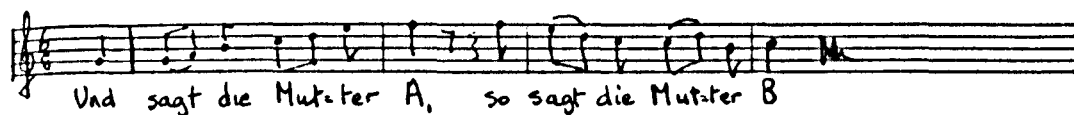
this overture, as it gives way to Dorchen's short recitative, provides the clearest example of Hiller's use of the opening symphony to provide an appropriate ritornello to the scenes of drama about to be acted:<sup>1</sup>



This flows straight into the verses of her song in praise of the morning. Unusually, Hiller laid aside the buffa style he normally employed in favour of the highly ornamented rococo style. This, however, was entirely in keeping with his consistent efforts to match the meaning and sentiment of Weisse's text:<sup>2</sup>



Interestingly enough, Weisse supplied a greater number of strophic songs in this text. Hiller avoided some of these, employing the various song forms he had developed in his earlier Singspiele. One typical example of his method occurs in Dorchen's song, Und sagt die Mutter A. Hiller sets Dorchen's imitation of her stepmother's self-contradictions to a lively tune in a major key in compound time:<sup>3</sup>



but he turns to the dominant minor to give clearer expression to the anguish referred to in Weisse's second stanza:<sup>4</sup>



1. Ibid., p. 14.
2. Ibid., p. 15.
3. Ibid., p. 18.
4. Ibid., p. 19.

In this way, Hiller turned Weisse's two verses into a comic song, but these he set as a single verse form.

Another form that Weisse included was the ballad form, in which the verses of the song convey a narrative. These were invariably marked Romanze, and Anne's song provides a typical example which occurs in Act One:<sup>1</sup>

Anne: Geh' mir doch! wenn der Tod käme, so gieng Dirs  
doch wohl, wie jener Braut:

Als einer Braut dem Bräutigam  
Der Tod einst aus dem Armen nahm:  
Wie rang sie da die Hände!  
Sie rief ihm zu: Barm Herzigkeit!  
Ach komm zurück: und sieh mein Leid,  
Und mach' auch ihm ein Ende.

Schnell kehrt er um, der böse Tod:  
Hier bin ich, sprach er, deiner Noth  
Das Ende gleich zu machen  
O rief sie blass vor schrecken aus,  
So geh' in meines Nachbars Haus  
Und hol' sein Weib, den Drachen.

Was fieng der Tod mit lächeln an,  
Hat Dir das Nachbars Weib gethan?  
Wart dies dein Elend helsen? ---  
Ihr Mann, rief sie, ist mir sehr gut,  
Wer weiss, was er aus Mitleid thut:  
Kurz: --- dann wird sichs schon geben.

Weisse includes no less than four of these, each one designed to illustrate a moral point. They also supplied an ideal vehicle for Hiller's talent in writing his increasingly popular volkstümliche Lieder. Where the length of the song brought the risk of the audience becoming restive, Weisse took refuge in the age-old device found in The Devil to Pay of introducing a few lines of dialogue between the verses of the song.<sup>2</sup>

Anne's song, Kunz fand einst einen armen Mann, provides a typical example.

As in the earlier Singspiele, Hiller employed the formal Italian aria to give additional status to the principal characters. Invariably these take the modern form: viz. A - B - A<sup>1</sup>.<sup>3</sup> Thus Robert, grandfather

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1. Weisse, Die Jubelhochzeit (Leipzig, 1773), p. 13.

2. Ibid., p. 40.

3. Ibid., p. 86 (Robert).

and head of the family, sings O welch ein Tag von gülden Glanz to round off the second act. In response Klaus, his son, sings an aria of much character in praise of his father's virtue: ein ehrlicher Mann. Hiller employs the ten-line stanza to provide the three sections of the through-composed aria which follows. The music, with its dotted martial rhythm, gives added colour to the imagery of Weisse's lines:<sup>1</sup>

A *Con Gravita*  
Ein ehrlicher Mann hält im = mer = fort

B *Allegretto*  
Nun hab' ich einst Do = ren und Kun = zen ge = schworen

A' *Tempo primo*  
Dum wenn ich nur kann, ich hab' es ge = schworen

During the course of the play Weisse made much of the dramatic opportunities to introduce duets, trios and choruses. Thus each of the acts is brought to a conclusion with a piece of choral writing. This is a marked advance on some of the earlier pieces in which opportunities of this kind were not always employed to advantage. In the final act, particularly, the successive verses of the divertissement sustain the scenes of celebration and dancing to the end of the play, as the successive events that have been in preparation come to fruition: thus, Dorchen announces her engagement to Kunz; Anne announces her engagement to Berthold; and Robert and Martha celebrate their wedding anniversary. Thus there are marked similarities between this finale and the final scenes of the first piece to be written in this form: Der Teufel ist los.<sup>2</sup>

Although many of the songs in the stage version were subsequently revised before being published, no new song forms appear in the later Singspiele save for the trios. The similarities were by no means confined

1. *Ibid.*, p. 34 (Klaus).

2. See above, p. 207.

to the music: the situation, like the Christmas party in Der Teufel or the harvest festivities in Die Aerntekranz, were all situations in which scenes of music and dancing might be expected to occur as a matter of course. Also the main comic character, as in Der Teufel, was of the tradesman's calling, in this case a master miller and therefore a shade wealthier.

Weisse's love of moralising verses is reflected in the value he placed upon the content of the ballads (viz. Romanzen). Of particular interest in this respect is the song delivered by Berthold in the second act, when he is telling Margrethe that he will forge a letter testifying to the fact of Kunz's death:<sup>1</sup>

Margrethe. Wenn's aber nicht wahr ist, und es kommt heraus?

Berthold. So kommt's heraus. Ist Dore meine Frau, so muss sie es bleiben, und winselt sie nur die Ohren voll, so sollen alle Muhl-räder klappern, dass ich nichts höre.

Margrethe. Wird's denn aber der Wirth auch thun?

Berthold. Warum nicht? es kostet ein Maas Mehl, und so bald ich etwas für ihn zu mahlen habe, so betrüge ich ihn wieder darum.

Ich mach' es wie die grossen Herrn,  
Auch sie verschenken manchmal gern:  
Aber wenn sie Dir was schenken,  
O so kannst Du sicher denken,  
Sie erwarten bald dafür  
Zehnmal mehr von Dir.

Margrethe. Hihihhi Schelm! Nu, wie wollt' Ihr denn schreiben?

Quite clearly Weisse draws an obvious moral from the situation but, mischievously, at the expense of the wealthy classes: a song which closely parallels Jobson's song in The Devil to Pay written by Charles Coffey: Let Matters of State disquiet the Great, and translated by Weisse in the first one-act version of Der Teufel given in 1752.<sup>2</sup> But, an even more

1. Weisse, Die Jubelhochzeit (Leipzig, 1773), pp. 43-4.

2. Coffey, The Devil to Pay (London, 1731), p. 17.

obvious reference occurs towards the end of the play:<sup>1</sup>

Anne (zu Kunzen). Ich hätte dich gerne noch als Geist  
eine weile in Dörfern herum laufen lassen, um  
Bertholden und dein schnatternde beisige Mutter  
zu schenken.

Ist der Teufel\* nicht im Spiel,  
So halt ich auf Geister\* viel:  
Geister, die mit Fleisch und Beinen,  
Immer freundlich uns erscheinen,  
Und um uns allein zu sehn,  
Andern leicht die Häuse drehn:

Geister, die uns Schuss verleihn,  
Wann uns harte Mutter dräun;  
Die die bösen Männer\* plagen,  
Wenn sie uns etwas versagen,  
Tag und Nacht, schnell wie der Wind  
Uns zu dienen fertig sind.

#### F. The Singspiel as a literary form

Weisse's reference to Der Teufel is interesting in itself, but reveals the extent of the craze which followed its 'second' success in 1776, with audiences going to see it again and again not only in Leipzig, but wherever the piece was staged. Now, seven years later in Berlin, Weisse could write a general reference to his earlier success and count on enough people in the audience to enjoy the joke: an indication of the widespread appeal of his first and last works in this genre.

In the wake of the reforms that Weisse had consciously introduced into his tragedies, the possibility exists that he introduced the same, or comparable, reforms into the less prestigious Singspiele. Examination of similarities and differences between the two forms reveals that disregarding the music there is clear evidence within the plays that Weisse well understood the working of comedy and those situations which called for music. In this respect it is significant indeed that Weisse, who

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1. Weisse, Die Jubelhochzeit (Leipzig, 1773), p. 185. The references are to the final chorus, Der Teufel ist ein böser Mann: to the opening song, Das allerbeste Weib bleibt doch des Mannes ärgste Plage: and, of course, to the magician's friendly 'Geister' who appear to carry out his instructions in the transformation scene.

had turned so many foreign pieces into successes at the box office, should cease to tap this profitable source. This may have been a consequence of the weaknesses inherent in the opéras comiques. There were at least two aspects of these pieces that marked them as archaic: the verse dialogue, which he had been so anxious to avoid in the tragedies, and their naive characters. In Weisse's pieces these characters were less gullible, much more robust, and there was much more emphasis on comedy as opposed to guile. So that, while it is true to say that many of these pieces were certainly adapted for the Koch theatre from the French, they were never performed in Germany in their original French form.<sup>1</sup> Thus it is interesting to note and identify the separate elements that make up the scenes of Die Jubelhochzeit.

Two of the most immediate aspects of the play occur as a direct result of Weisse imposing the unities of time and place on the scenes of the play. Thus the whole of the action takes place in the village during the course of a single day, and these two rules, taken from the French drama, supply the bounds within which the entire play is acted.<sup>2</sup> However, closer examination of the comic character, Berthold, reveals a surprising similarity to that of Jobsen Zeckel. Like Jobsen, Berthold is a rough-and-ready countryman, and his own master: a facet of his character which comes to the fore when he plots with Dorchen's stepmother to secure his marriage contract; his attitude to women has much in common with Jobsen. The two men are both represented as strong characters, equally unwilling to succumb to the stratagems of their women, and equally contemptuous of the hypocrisy practised by some of their so-called betters. In fact, they hold something in common with the character

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1. Weisse, Der Teufel (Leipzig, 1768), Vorbericht.

2. This convention in the French theatre derived from the theories of drama advanced by Aristotle. Shakespeare interpreted the Greek rules with much greater freedom. Hence the controversy as to which interpretation of the rule was the most valid.

of Peachum in The Beggar's Opera, and other central characters of English corrective-comedy.

Robert and Martha also present very powerful images, providing a springboard for the scenes of celebration. In common with this kind of characterisation they appear cumbersome until the final scenes of celebration give them an unexpected sense of purpose. The weaker characters of the two women, Dorchén and Anne, stand in marked contrast to these stronger images; their love intrigues are reminiscent of the scenes from Die Liebe auf dem Lande in which the heroine, Lieschen, schemes to remain free of the count's attentions in order to marry her sweetheart Hännchen, a peasant farmer: a Singspiel adapted by Weisse from the French pieces by Mme Favart and Louis Anseaume.<sup>1</sup> In a similar way, in Die Jubelhochzeit Dorchén schemes to marry her own sweetheart Kunz, also a peasant farmer, leaving the worldly wealth, in the person of Berthold, to fall into the arms of Anne. This climax underlines the moral theme of the piece - that the bonds of true love can withstand all worldly temptation. Clearly Weisse combined traditional elements from English and French theatre in equal measure.

Thus the same mixture of styles, borrowed from the English and French theatre traditions and embodied in his English plays, are also to be found in Die Jubelhochzeit, the last of his Singspiele. Even though the scenes of his Singspiele were intended primarily to entertain, the fact was that he was also concerned to safeguard his own quite considerable reputation as a playwright. To meet the critical demands of his times it was necessary to produce a credible piece within which the parts agreed with the whole. Clearly, with this in mind, Weisse combined the situations and strong characters of the English comedies with the artless intrigues of the opéras comiques; the development and psychology of the

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1. Weisse, Die Liebe auf dem Lande (Leipzig, 1777). See the author's note below the dramatis personae.



characters within the tightly structured discipline imposed by French drama with its dependence on the unities: but, above all, the dialogue, the main vehicle of expression in all of the Singspiele, was always written in the modern prose form.

#### G. The Singspiel after 1775

The success of the partnership between Koch, Weisse and Hiller was enough to establish the new entertainment. Indeed, within the space of only seven years Koch commissioned ten Singspiele; and they generated enough income to move the company from Leipzig to the Prussian capital, Berlin.

Soon the work of Weisse and Hiller inspired a flood of imitations, and before long nearly every German city had its theatre entrepreneur staging the latest piece translated from the French and set to music in the form that Hiller had established as the model. These pieces, like the Italian interludes they replaced, were not in any way original works, and they contributed nothing to the further development of the new entertainment, but they established the Singspiel in the form developed by Weisse and Hiller throughout the German states.

In due course the succeeding generation of dramatists brought their own improvements to the genre, strengthening the characterisation and bringing greater depth to the poetry, greater realism to the prose dialogue and further consolidating the musical style developed by Hiller. Among the most distinguished of new composers was Hiller's pupil Neefe, destined to win a small place in the history of music as a composer and as one of Beethoven's tutors. The musical form was now no longer in danger; but the Singspiel was essentially a literary form and, if it was not to deteriorate once more into a mere imitation of foreign pieces as had been the case formerly with the Italian interludes, then it was in the interest of the composer to obtain the services of the best dramatist

of the day. Fortunately, with the example provided by men like Gottsched, Weisse and, above all, by Lessing, Germany was no longer a nation entirely without a literature of its own, and just as Lessing had proved to be the master of his age so one name would come to dominate the age which succeeded him.

In 1766, the year of Koch's triumph with Der Teufel ist los, Johann von Goethe was in his second year as a student in Leipzig.<sup>1</sup> Fired by the example of Weisse, he was to produce a number of Singspiel texts. Many of these were set to music by Reichardt, one of Hiller's staunchest supporters.

Like Weisse, Goethe applied himself to the new forms with great diligence and following the example of his predecessor he turned to English literature for his subject, adapting part of Goldsmith's novel The Vicar of Wakefield for the subject of his text.<sup>2</sup> Clearly the early Singspiele were exposed to the same literary forces that were shaping the changes then taking place in the more noble play forms. Many of these changes originated in England; and they enabled playwrights to provide situations in the Singspiele that inspired truly memorable music. Thus, the sensibility that appeared throughout Weisse's texts paved the way for the sentimental Singspiele which followed.

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1. See the article in Allgemeiner deutsche Biographie.

2. This is fully covered in W.J.G. Martinsen's dissertation Goethes Singspiele in Verhältniss zu den Weissischen Operetten (Dresden, 1887), pp. 14-17.

## CONCLUSION

Attempts to evaluate the contribution made by Weisse and Hiller to the German stage require some reference to the circumstances in which their works were performed. By coincidence the politician Thomas Nugent, visiting Leipzig in 1756, gave a very complete description of the city, its trade and its inhabitants.<sup>1</sup> He reported that, although the town was small, houses built of brick were often seven storeys high, and let in tenements from garret to cellar. Thus the city supported a large population for its size. Significantly, even at that time Leipzig was an important centre of trade and commerce, holding three trade fairs during the course of the year: New Year, Easter and Michaelmas. These were as important for the theatres and publishers as they were for the city's traders and citizens at large, since the Fairs, offering goods from the whole of Europe and the Indies, attracted visitors to the city in large numbers. These observations confirm the general prosperity which allowed Koch to establish his company in 1752, and to regain his former position in 1765-66 after the Seven Years' War. Moreover, civic pride was sufficient for merchants to endow a new theatre for the benefit of the citizens.

Nugent's observations as to both the circumstances and aspirations of the citizens shed some light on Gottsched's campaign to reform the stage. His attempt to establish classical tragedy as the principal form of entertainment, purely on grounds of its formal purity, offered little by way of entertainment to audiences unschooled in matters of literary taste. He had also lost sight of the fact that it was their wealth that provided the very theatres in which his 'model' plays were presented. Clearly his perspectives were obscured by theoretical dogma, and it is not

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1. T. Nugent, A Grand Tour, or A Journey through the Netherlands, Germany, Italy and France (London, 1756), second edition, 2 vols. See ii, pp. 224-32.

surprising that he lost support. Significantly, Weisse's comedy, Die Poeten nach der Mode, set in the house of the merchant Schwindel, won the immediate approval of local audiences. In many respects the play simply reflected popular opinion.

Social conditions which then prevailed in Leipzig were surprisingly similar to those which had prevailed in Walpole's London when, as a result of his fiscal measures, a rapid increase in the prosperity of the citizens resulted in larger theatre audiences. Certainly, Gottsched's opponents, the Bremische Beyträge, looked to London rather than Paris for models upon which they would base their future plays. In London thriving social conditions had by then wrought great changes in the theatre repertoire. No longer did playwrights mock the nouveaux riches in comedies of manners. Instead they became the subjects of plays, as dramatists like George Lillo created a new form of tragedy true to common life in his The London Merchant (1731).<sup>1</sup> Thus English plays written during the 1730s satisfied contemporary demands for realism and touched upon the lives of ordinary people.

In Paris, where social changes necessary for such reforms had not taken place, dramatists wrote plays in which the subject was integral with its formal design, and in which realism was sacrificed in favour of convention. Thus heroic verse forms continued to provide the main vehicle for tragedy while a lower verse form served the comedy. Even the characters of the French drama were remote from experience: those in the tragedies too idealised, those in the opéras comiques too naive. Yet the French tragedy was the chief means by which Gottsched had sought to re-model German drama during the 1740s and '50s.

Gottsched's opponents sought models more in keeping with their own times, while entrepreneurs such as Schönmann and Frau Neuber instinctively turned to more popular attractions to fill their theatres and keep

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1. Robertson, History of German Literature (London, 1970), pp. 228 and 251-2.

their companies in being.

Caspar von Borcke's translations of English plays provided German dramatists with new horizons. In this respect the success of Der Teufel was of the greatest significance. Not only was it a highly popular entertainment but, leaving aside the question of its magical scenes, it presented an audience of merchants and citizens with a realistic representation of a fellow tradesman, albeit one from a lower calling. Following Weisse's adaptation of the piece in 1752, there was the added attraction of Standfuss's music written in a style adapted from that employed in the Italian interludes. Its success established the Singspiel in its initial form, for Standfuss then wrote music for Der lustige Schuster and Der stolze Bauer Jochem Tröbs. Thus the furore surrounding Gottsched's objections to Der Teufel hastened changes already taking place.

Lessing and Weisse were notable precisely for their appreciation of English literature at a time when criteria governing matters of literary taste were still dictated by the French. Consequently they formed their own theories as to how best German drama could be reformed. The first practical result of their efforts appeared in Hamburg in 1756 with Lessing's bürgerliches Trauerspiel, Miss Sara Sampson. But though Lessing was the leader of this reforming group he was not alone. Weisse, working along similar lines, had developed a dramatic theory of his own, and adapted Shakespeare's Richard III (1759) which won widespread acclaim.

Ultimately Weisse combined his own theory of joining traditional elements of English and French drama into a single new form, with the prose dialogue of Lessing's bürgerliches Trauerspiel, in his adaptation of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, Romeo und Julie (1767). Thus Weisse's dramatic theory was formed along lines that had no connection with opéra comique before he visited Paris.

After 1759 all the pieces written or adapted by Weisse were subjected to the same treatment. These include the full-length version of Der

Teufel ist los (1766) and the last of his Singspiele, Die Jubelhochzeit (1773). In this piece the grand situation and strong characters of the English tradition blended with the conventional love intrigues of the opéras comiques, the whole being written in prose dialogue.<sup>1</sup> In these circumstances Weisse's borrowings from Sedaine and Favart can be interpreted as steps in an experiment to secure the best possible balance between the traditional forms of English and French drama. Similarly, differences in the music between the handwritten theatre copy and the keyboard edition of 1770 show similar evidence of experiment and, in the light of experience, of change.

Weisse, according to the rules of his dramatic theory, adapted song forms equally from the ballad-opera and opéra comique. These then took on special significance in the drama. The Romanze (adapted from the ballad-opera), included for the appeal of its homespun moral tale, gave rise to the volkstümliche Lieder. The chanson à la ronde emphasised the sense of community within the theatre and later in the community at large. But the simple moral song with its infinite scope for giving expression to sentiments of all kinds was of great benefit to the genre and inspired Hiller to develop a form of Lied in which several verses were treated as a single musical entity.

Articles published in the Hamburg'sche Unterhaltungen indicate that Hiller experimented with melodies written in the French style, but by all accounts these were not well received. Because of this Hiller returned to the Italian style, but continued to use a folk song style for his settings of the Romanzen. At the same time, his systematic use of Italian forms, arias for the principal characters, ariettas for the expressive songs and minor characters, and folk song styles for the Romanzen, added depth to Weisse's characterisation. As a result the Singspiel stood as a unique and modern form of entertainment.

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1. See Appendix IV, pp. 456-76.

During the period between 1766 and 1773 there was considerable scope for both men to adopt new ideas, since each plot imposed its own demands on matters of style. Therefore it is all the more interesting to note that in the formal design of Die Jubelhochzeit (1773) Weisse made use of the French aubade and the usual chanson à la ronde which Hiller set to appropriate melodies in the Italian style. He employed arias for the main characters, ariettas and Lieder for the minor characters, several Romanzen set in a folk song style and, of course, the central satirical song mocking the nobility. In this way many of Hiller's musical forms grew out of Weisse's treatment of the text.

Koch's death in 1775 marked the end of Weisse's career as a writer of Singspiel texts, and soon Hiller turned his attention to other musical interests. Nevertheless demand for these entertainments continued unabated. Now it was left to the rising generation of dramatists and musicians to take up the challenge. Already a growing band of entrepreneurs, following the example of Weisse and Hiller, were adapting French pieces for the German stage. As a result, most cities boasted a company that included Singspiele in its repertoire, which provided a valuable training ground for provincial musicians, who mostly emulated the musical style favoured by the Berlin song school.<sup>1</sup> This coincided with a profound change of attitude among the nobility and encouraged playwrights to produce a steady flow of new texts.<sup>2</sup>

Chief among these was Johann von Goethe whose pieces became renowned for their characterisation. The first of these, Erwin und Elmira, was adapted from Goldsmith's The Vicar of Wakefield, not for the sake of any previous commercial in the theatre, but because it reflected Goethe's

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1. Minor, Ch. F. Weisse (Innsbruck, 1880), pp. 180-99.

2. In 1768 Koch staged the première of Weisse and Hiller's Singspiel at the court of the Herzogin von Weimar, Anna Amalia, who some time later also composed a setting of Goethe's Erwin und Elmira. Kawada, Johann Adam Hiller (Marburg/Lahn, 1969), Phil. Diss., p. 34.

own emotional entanglements at the time. Nevertheless, this portrayal of Goldsmith's love story marked a further stage in the development of the genre, adding to the techniques already pioneered by Weisse. Also, like Weisse, Goethe was fortunate to find in André a musician sympathetic to the needs of the drama.<sup>1</sup>

Just at that time, Johann André had completed the music for his first Singspiel, Der Töpfer. This was staged in Frankfurt in 1774 with great success. Goethe was sufficiently impressed to entrust the composition of the music for Erwin und Elmira to him. It received its première in Frankfurt in 1775. Meanwhile, a vogue for Turkish plays had an immediate effect on the subjects of these pieces. As a result Hiller's pupil, Christian Gottlieb Neefe, won widespread approval for the Turkish effects in his music to Adelheit und Veltheim staged in Frankfurt in 1780, while Bretzner's famous Turkish piece, Belmonte und Constanze, also set by André, was staged in Berlin the following year. Meanwhile, Georg Benda's setting of Gotter's Romeo und Julie in Gotha in 1776 marked a development of a different kind, for this was the first Singspiel to be written with a serious subject. But the work of Reichardt in Berlin did much to consolidate the genre with a series of works among which are to be found Goethe's Claudina von Villa Bella (1789), Lilla (1791) and Erwin und Elmira (1793).

The widespread success of the Berlin song school was marked by its adherence to an idealised folksong style held locally in the highest regard. Significantly, this held little appeal for Viennese audiences with a preference for opéras comiques, and an even stronger liking for Italian opera.

As early as 1767 Singspiel had been staged there. The first of these, Die doppelte Verwandlung, a variant of Le diable à quatre, was remarkable

1. W.J.G. Martinsen, Goethe's Singspiele (Dresden, 1887), pp. 28-9.



only for the inclusion of an Italian interlude during the party scene. But these pieces were so well received that in 1778 the emperor Joseph II founded the Nationalsingspiel.<sup>1</sup> Among the pieces staged here was Stephanie's reworked version of Bretzner's text Die Entführung aus dem Serail, oder Belmonte und Constanze (1728). In this piece, Mozart combined the high moral tone of the Singspiel and the new craze for Turkish music with the local taste for the Italian opera. This brought at least to this one work an immediate improvement to the overall balance and to the way in which the music sustained the drama. Thus, the next development of the Singspiel came from the enrichment of the musical techniques rather than from any new attitudes to the dramaturgy.<sup>2</sup>

However, social traumas wrought by the twenty years of war that ravaged European society were generally reflected in the arts and were particularly evident in the Singspiel. Following the war a need had arisen to give expression to feelings of national awareness, and when Carl Maria von Weber took a powerful national subject and set it in the form of a Singspiel it met with tumultuous approval. Significantly, Der Freischütz received its première on the 18th June 1821, the sixth anniversary of Waterloo.

Initially Weisse had regarded his Singspiele as simple, light-hearted farces. But his later pieces, combining comedy with sentiment, provided a means of ensuring the continued development of the genre, and as the literary demands changed so the kind of music required became progressively more expressive and more profound. Clearly this was the foundation of a modern style, far removed from the buffa style originally employed by Standfuss. Weisse's texts combined with Hiller's music were indeed a part of the theatre of sensibility and marked an important step on the way towards establishing a truly national form of German opera.

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1. E. Manning, The Nationalsingspiel in Vienna from 1778-1785 (Durham, 1975), Phil. Diss.

2. E. Anderson (ed.), The Letters of Mozart and his Family (New York, 1966), second edition, 2 vols. See ii, pp. 768-70.

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